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# The use of power in Aboriginal organisations

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## Abstract

The discipline of Organisational Behaviour aims to equip managers with the skills and knowledge necessary to predict and control people's behaviour in organisations. For this reason, the use of power within organisations is a major theme in this discipline. While the use of power is a well-documented phenomenon in the management literature and is recognised as central to the management and leadership of organisations, there is little agreement over what it is or where it comes from. One of the research questions addressed by this thesis relates to the source of power. Specifically, what is power and how is it used in an organisational context. In the current research, the subject of inquiry is the use of power in the organisational behaviour and management practices of Aboriginal organisations. The purpose of this inquiry is to enhance understanding of the management and leadership of organisations, especially those managed by Aboriginal Australians, and to provide insight into those aspects of best practice that result in more effective organisational management. This research aims to reveal how Aboriginal management might be differentiated, if at all, from normative Western management. Guiding this examination is a broad-based theoretically derived descriptive framework of the nature of power in organisations.

Many observers of Aboriginal organisations, including politicians, public servants, and Aborigines themselves, have expressed concern over the practices adopted to manage these organisations. Moreover, many Aboriginal leaders maintain that the management of their organisations must be done in a culturally appropriate way. Unfortunately, there is little in the management literature to indicate what such a practice might be and there is no research that examines Aboriginal management.

Nonetheless, other literature reveals that many Aboriginal leaders are refined politicians, quite adept at securing what they seek. They readily use their power to control people, organisations and events. In response to the lack of understanding of power in Aboriginal organisations, the second research question examined in this thesis is what is culturally appropriate (Aboriginal) management?

Four Aboriginal organisations representing a range of organisational contexts were selected to develop in-depth case studies of the use of power by organisational members, managers and leaders. Consistent with the ethical standards applicable to this research, information about organisational participants was either gathered from material available in the public domain or through the method of participant observation. The anonymity of participants is maintained with the use of fictitious initials, including the data gathered from the public domain.

One of the clear findings of the research was that the type of power used did not predict whether the outcome for the organisation, as assessed against its mission statement, was positive or negative. Analysis of Case 1 (Aboriginal Health Service) (AHS) revealed that power was being used to legitimise the actions of the manager and to act as a gate keeping mechanism to mask his covert activities. Analysis of Case 2 (Aboriginal Legal Service) (ALS) revealed that power was being used in the internal environment for the public good. In contrast, examination of the external environment revealed that a hostile coalition had used its power in an attempt to undermine the reputation of the ALS. Analysis of Case 3 (The radio station) revealed that the manager was using his power to improve the commercial performance of the organisation. There was considerable resistance to the change process, but that resistance was being effectively managed for the sake of the organisation's survival

and growth. Case 4 (Aboriginal Land Council) revealed that power was being used to suppress legitimate demands of staff and clients for the benefit of the ruling elite.

Overall, the Aboriginal managers in each of the four cases were applying the management functions of Mintzberg (1973), which is consistent with Australia's industrialised society. Examination in the context of contemporary Aboriginal culture was not possible because there is no body of literature to describe what that culture might be. The analysis did reveal, however, that there was little evidence of any of the values, beliefs and customs of traditional Aboriginal society being carried forward into the organisational behaviour or the management of these organisations. To the contrary, the cases revealed that there was little in the management and leadership practices of these organisations that set them apart from other organisations in Australian society. Consequently, the case studies did not support the notion of a culturally appropriate management practice for Aboriginal organisations that is differentiated from Mintzberg (1973).

Although uncontroversial understanding of the nature and origin of power remains an elusive goal, there is some empirical evidence on how and why it is used. Much of the management literature argues that power is or can be the independent variable in an organisational process. However, analysis of the data obtained in this research supports a different conclusion, namely, that leadership style is more likely to be the prime independent variable and the control mechanism, with power being a mere conduit through which the Aboriginal managers realised their goals. While the origin of power remains debatable, its use in this context by the Aboriginal staff and managers was to facilitate their desired organisational outcomes.

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## Abbreviations

ACA Act – Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act (1976)

AHEC – Aboriginal Health Education Company

ATSIC – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

ACLS – AC Legal Service

AKALSS – AKA Legal Services Secretariat

AHS – Aboriginal Health Service

ALS – Aboriginal Legal Service

CL – Corporations Law (Commonwealth)

RCIADIC – Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody

I declare that the work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original and my own work, except as acknowledged in the text, and that the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

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# 1 Introduction and Overview

This thesis aims to advance understanding of power and power relations in organisations. Four Aboriginal organisations served as the contextual setting, which also enabled the researcher to explore whether Aboriginal management practices diverge from Anglo-Australian management practices. This thesis is not an investigation of Aboriginal culture *per se*, rather, through examining the use of power, the research question asks if any elements of Aboriginal culture (i.e. values, beliefs and customs) are indicated in the behaviour or management practices uncovered in the four case studies, or if the cases reflect Western management culture and practices.

Four organisations representing a range of organisational contexts and representing the issues relating to many Aboriginal problems were selected to develop in-depth case studies of the use of power by organisational members, managers and leaders of Aboriginal organisations (see Section 3.6 for an extended discussion on the case selection criteria). The case studies are (1) Aboriginal Health Service (AHS), (2) Aboriginal Legal Service, (3) Radio Station, and (4) Aboriginal Land Council.

In all Cases the identities of people and places is suppressed through the use of fictitious names. This was considered to be necessary because of the sensitive nature of the data, including the secondary data.

## 1.1 Literature review

A number of differing views of power exist in the management literature. This review incorporates several variables identified in the more prominent literatures to develop a broad theoretical framework to guide the current research. In particular, power is linked with organisational outcomes through several mediating mechanisms:

management functions, leadership styles and organisational context. Each of these areas is explored in turn before turning to the topic of Aboriginal management. As examinations of Aboriginal management practices are absent in the current management literature, it was necessary to extrapolate such practices from what is known about the values, beliefs and practices that traditional Aboriginal society used to manage their affairs. Because no formal organisations existed in that society, it was necessary to generalise from the anthropological evidence available on the management of the tribal group to the management of an institution. By using information available on Aboriginal tribal management as a proxy, it is possible to construct an understanding of what traditional Aboriginal management practices would be. This understanding of traditional practices was used as the benchmark against which normative Western management practices and the practices observed in the case studies were compared.

## 1.2 Justification for the research

Driving this research is the continued confusion over what power is and how it could or should be used. Further clarity about the nature of power and power relations should produce a better understanding of organisational behaviour and the management of organisations.

In the current studies, an examination of Aboriginal management and organisational behaviour provides an opportunity to detect the presence of Aboriginal and Western styles of influencing others, especially through power relations. Similarly, the studies examine if Aboriginal management styles are essentially Western, with few influences of Aboriginal culture evident; a mixture of Aboriginal and Western styles;

or are strongly similar to the values, beliefs and practices that are observed in traditional Aboriginal culture.

## 1.3 Methodology

Case studies were used as the major method for this research. The writer was a participant observer in two of the cases and the other two cases were constructed from secondary data. The case studies focus upon how Aboriginal managers, as well as other organisational members, use their power to affect organisational outcomes in Aboriginal communities and organisations.

The literature on business research argues that a combination of deductive and inductive reasoning is the best approach for this type of case study based research (e.g. Babbie 1998; Mason 1998; Zikmund 2000). For this reason, a theoretical model was constructed for a deductive analysis of the data, with sufficient flexibility to allow for inductive reasoning. The cases were selected in order to provide a good range of contexts from which a conclusion on Aboriginal management practices could be drawn. The recommended minimum number of four cases was used (Eisenhardt 1989).

This research was guided by the requirements of the *Behavioural and Social Sciences Ethical Review Committee* (BSSERC) of The University of Queensland, which incorporates the *Joint NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice.* This research was conducted with appropriate ethical review and clearance from The University of Queensland and the Aboriginal organisations that participated.

## 1.4 Outline of the thesis

The thesis comprises six chapters. Chapter One provides the research questions and the structure of the thesis. Chapter Two reviews the current literature on power and management functions as well as some discussion about the context in which the four Aboriginal case organisations existed. A theoretical model is then constructed to guide the analysis of the four case studies. Chapter Three reviews historical and anthropological literature to describe traditional Aboriginal society in order to establish a benchmark for the purpose of placing today's Aboriginal organisations in a temporal and cultural framework. Chapter Four describes and justifies the methodology for this research. Chapter Five contains the case studies and their coded data. It also contains the analysis of the data using the analytical tool. Chapter Six discusses the key findings and makes recommendations for future research on power and new approaches for dealing with the management of Aboriginal organisations.

# 2 Literature Review

## 2.1 Introduction

The Royal Commission Into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC 1997) provided a comprehensive description of how many Aborigines in Australia today are living in unacceptable circumstances. The delivery of services to those disadvantaged Aborigines is often vested in Aboriginal controlled organisations that are usually incorporated under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) Act (1989) or The Aboriginal Councils and Associations (ACA) Act (1976). It is usually the case that a democratically elected Board of Directors provides the leadership function. A Chief Executive Officer or General Manager provides the management function ensuring, in part, that culturally appropriate management practices are observed. The assumption underlying these Acts is that decisions affecting Aborigines are best made by the Aboriginal leaders and managers themselves (Beckett 1988; Edwards 1975). This research concerns itself with how power is used in all organisations and to what end.

This research is framed by two under-researched issues. First, the research is prompted by the need to expand understanding of power in new contexts. Second, research is needed to evaluate the claim of a number of Aboriginal leaders that their organisations must be managed in a culturally appropriate way and that their management practices should not be judged by the standards and procedures of mainstream society. History shows that many Aboriginal controlled organisations have come under fire (Koch 1996; Nason & Harris 1999; O'Brien 1999), with their missions being highly politicised and often contentious (Hiley 1997; Keen 1991; Sutton 1998). In this volatile environment, it is difficult in many circumstances to

define the *modus operandi* of such organisations (Ruben & Stewart 1998). The internal workings of Aboriginal organisations are often clouded in a level of mystique with respect to their management methods and levels of organisational effectiveness (Koch 1996, 1999).

This thesis aims to explain how the managers and staff of four Aboriginal organisations used their power to affect organisational outcomes. While the use of power is the basis for this research, the management literature argues that other variables must exist for power to be actualised in an organisational context.

## 2.2 Defining the variables

The literature review starts with a discussion on power and how it can be used to affect outcomes. However, power is not an object that can be examined in its own right: It exists as a capacity in the cognitive world of a human agent (Bullock & Trombley 2000; Hardy 1995; Morgan 1997; Pfeffer 1981). Within the four case studies, the agent of prime concern is the Aboriginal manager. It is therefore necessary to review the literatures that explain what managers do (e.g. Mintzberg 1973) and the characteristics of Aboriginal management.

A number of writers (Barnes 1988; Hardy 1995; Pfeffer 1998) argue that power can only be viewed in its context specific circumstances. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the organisational context of the case studies. This research does not examine the outcomes of power in any great detail, but rather focuses on the processes that produced those outcomes. The next section describes the connectivity between power, management functions, organisational context and outcomes.

## 2.3 Power

The management of organisations and employees is more different today than possibly at other times in history. Recent changes reflect the shift from the industrial era paradigm to that of the information economy (Hunt 2000). Civilisations preceding the industrial age achieved effective control of the workforce, but through a different set of strategies and management styles. For example, through management control and power, the pyramids were built in ancient Egypt; the Roman Empire conquered vast tracts of land; and the Royal Navy facilitated the expansion of the British Empire.

The multifarious relation between organisational practices and power defies clarity and simplicity. In its basic sense, power is the ability to do something. Power over others is the ability to make them do something, possibly against their will. Individuals acquire power, including power over others, by virtue of the social positions they occupy. Individuals who occupy different organisational positions are likely to have very different lives. As a consequence they tend to develop cognitive habits and normative attitudes attuned to their circumstances (Tanesini 1999).

The study of power has taken on a number of different forms over the centuries. Power and authority are rarely simply based upon might or the distribution of prestige goods. Frequently, they are dressed up in ritualistic practices that help to validate authority. In the Late Iron Age of Britain, for example, it was the horse that symbolised the power of potential rulers and leaders (Creighton 2000). In 1762, Rousseau observed in *The Social Contract* "The strongest man is never strong enough to be always master unless he transforms his power into right, and obedience into duty" (Bullock & Trombley 2000). Power has been defined as the probability of carrying out one's own will despite resistance (Weber 1947). To have power is

relative, not absolute, because it is subject to the specific context and relationships. Foucault (2000, p. 327), writing from a broad sociological perspective in the 1950s, observed that "while the human subject is placed in relations of production and of signification, he is equally placed in power relations that are very complex." The exercise of power is not as simple as a relationship between individuals or collectives. Foucault argues that there is no such entity as power. Power exists only as exercised by some on others, only when it is put into action, even though it is inscribed in a field of sparse available possibilities underpinned by permanent structures.

Power has been used by the human race to achieve domination, control or organisational outcomes for millennia. In relatively modern times (e.g. Rousseau in 1762; Weber in 1947; and Foucault in the 1950s) it has been well documented, but it is only recently that power emerged as a topic within the field of organisational behaviour. While organisational behaviour as a discipline continued to gain strength in the mid 1970s, it was not until the 1980s that the discipline was sufficiently refined to be able to focus on power (Bacharach & Lawler 1980).

As in the past, the dominant society, to a large extent, prescribes the *modus operandi* by which management uses power within that society. Possibly a key difference in the use of power in modern times, however, is the importance of certain limits on management behaviours (e.g. corporate law, industrial relations law and ethical codes). However, there is still considerable opportunity for managers to establish and to impose their individual styles of managing and leading people, including how they gain and exercise power (Bailey 1988; Carlopio et al. 1997). Any attempt to understand power must extend beyond the confines of organisation and management theory (Hardy 1995; Kramer & Neale 1998).

Power and influence are not the same. While the terms might appear to be closely related, behaviours associated with them have been found to be distinctive from one another (Hinkin & Schriesheim 1990). Influence is usually more dependent upon persuasion than upon explicit or implicit coercion, although in given circumstances power and influence may be intertwined (Hay & Hartel, 2001).

Power need not be exercised to get results, even though it is the medium through which conflicts of interest are ultimately resolved. It influences who gets what, when, and how (Morgan 1997). On the other hand, the most popular literature indicates a wide diversity of approaches to the definition and meaning of power. Power implies various psychological states, i.e. motivational, perceptual, as well as behavioural. The motive to exert power over others has many implications, interpersonally and organisationally. For example, people with a strong power motive may present themselves well when seeking a post but prove to be disastrous choices once selected. They may also perceive situations in power terms and act accordingly, as exemplified in Machiavellianism (McClelland 1975).

Power provides institutional capabilities for humans to achieve outcomes (Orlikowski & Robey 1991) and it has a transformational capacity over the social and material world (Orlikowski 1992). Power in a social system operates through resources that members have at their disposal. These resources are the media and/or the source of power and are structural components that generate structures of control (Orlikowski 1992). In other words, power establishes a control structure (Wiesner & Millett 2000).

Organisational power is basically structural in that it usually comes from imposed authority. Pfeffer (1981) observed that most studies of power in organisations focussed on hierarchical power. In reality, other forms of power are in play, such as

power sharing or empowerment, and the ability to fend off the unwanted power demands of others (Hollander & Offermann 1990). The power-and-politics view of organisations considers such realities by looking at the ways individuals and groups in organisations contend for resources and other desired ends. This holistic perspective captures much more of the available evidence on power than does the limited paradigm of formal structures, or simply assuming the notion of common purpose being sought with little or no conflict. Though power is imputed to an organisational role, actualising it depends upon who occupies it and how that person is perceived by others, and their relationship. Power becomes a reality when others perceive it and respond accordingly. Some power depends more on personal qualities, such as knowledge and expertise, than on position (Cooper & Argyris 1998).

In his exploration of the theories of power and domination, Stewart (2001) presents the argument that there must be a clear distinction between concepts and relations of power and domination. Power is not the same as domination because an agent can exercise power without domination, such as in the case of expert power. Stewart concluded that "the literature on power in the human sciences indicates two characteristics: a thematic distinction between power to and power over, combined with an overwhelming preoccupation with the conceptual, theoretical, empirical and political explication of the latter" (2001, p. 11). In this context Stewart then reviews the work of Lukes (1974), Parsons (1967), Giddens (1984), Foucault (1982) and Mann (1986, 1993). These theoretical concepts of power are then dissected and reduced to the notion of "power to" and "power over", with Stewart concluding that although "power over" always entails "power to", the reverse is not the case. Stewart provides a credible analysis of the literature on power that already exists, but his argument does not provide any new information on the theoretical meaning of power,

or any discussion on the possibility of its metaphysical dimension. Stewart provides more details about the information on power that already exists and applies it to the wider environment of society and politics. This is not an analysis of power *per se*, but an analysis of other people's analysis of power.

Power is not the same as leadership, but is a feature of it. Leaders use power, but power is not leadership. Excessive reliance on power can have negative effects, but the reverse is also true. Holding and wielding power can have unintended effects, such as the destructive effect of excessive power on relationships. Four corruptive influences of power are seen to operate:

1. The desire to have power becomes an end in itself, with implications for the means-end relationship;

2. Access to power tempts the individual to use institutional resources for illegitimate self-benefit;

3. False feedback is elicited from others, with an exalted sense of self-worth; and

4. Others' worth is devalued with a desire to avoid having close social contacts with them (Kipnis 1976).

The use of power comes from its reality as well as its perception. Power, or the perception of it, provides leverage in the negotiating process, and legitimate power must be endorsed by the leader's followers for it to be effective (Hollander 1992). Even in a clear social exchange power does play a part, although Blau (1964) highlights the difference between a noncoercive social exchange relationship and one that is characterised by power.

Selected views on power are shown in Table 2-1: (French & Raven 1959), Table 2-2: (Robbins et al. 1997), Table 2-3 (Morgan 1997) and Table 2-4: (Yukl 1998). These authors describe the various bases or types of power, as well as elements that are brought under control by power in organisations.

As Tables 2-1 to 2-4 indicate, there is a general consensus, at least among these contemporary theorists, about the four or five bases of power. While French and Raven's (1959) classification of power is still one of the most popular, it has been criticised because of the use of bases of power and sources of power. In order to improve the understanding of power, Robbins et al. (2001), for example, have separated bases and sources of power into what they consider to be clearer and more independent categories. The next section provides a more in-depth examination of the concept of power.

**Table 2-1: Power (French and Raven 1959)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Coercive | Depends on fear |
| Reward | Derives from the ability to distribute anything of value (typically money, favourable performance appraisals, interesting work assignments, friendly colleagues and preferred working hours or sales territories). |
| Expert | Refers to influence that derives from special skills or knowledge |
| Legitimate | Based on the formal rights a person receives as a result of holding an authoritative position or role in an organisation |
| Referent | Develops out of other's admiration for a person and a desire to model their behaviour and attitudes after that person |

## Table 2-2: Power (Robbins et al. 2001)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Bases of power** – what power holders control that allows them to manipulate the behaviour of others. | |
| Coercive | Power that is based on fear |
| Reward | The control of rewards valued by others |
| Persuasive | The ability to allocate and manipulate symbolic rewards |
| Knowledge | The ability to control unique and valuable information |
| **Sources of power** – how power holders come to control the bases of power. | |
| Position | The power holder's formal position within a structural hierarchy where they have control over such matters as symbols, important information, and coercive resources |
| Personal | Influence attributed to one's personal characteristics |
| Expert | Influence based on special skills or knowledge |
| Opportunity | Influence obtained as a result of being in the right place at the right time |

## Table 2-3: Power (Morgan 1997)

| | |
|---|---|
| Formal authority | A form of legitimised power that is respected and acknowledged by those with whom one interacts |
| Control of scarce resources | An ability to exercise control over the flow of resources such as money, materials, technology, personnel, and support from customers, suppliers, and the community at large |
| Use of organisational structure, rules and regulations | Most often, organisational structure, rules, regulations, and procedures are viewed as rational instruments intended to aid task performance. A political view of these instruments, however, suggests that in many situations they are often best understood as products and reflections of a struggle for political control |
| Control of decision process | An ability to influence the outcomes of decision making processes such as decision premises, decision processes, and decision issues and objectives |
| Control of knowledge and information | Power accrues to the person who is able to structure attention to issues in a way that in effect defines the reality of the decision making process |
| Control of boundaries | By monitoring and controlling boundary transactions, people are able to build up considerable power |
| Ability to cope with uncertainty | Organisation implies a certain degree of interdependence, so that discontinuous or unpredictable situations in one part of an organisation have considerable implications for operations elsewhere. An ability to deal with these uncertainties is a source of power |
| Control of technology | From the beginning of history, technology has served as an instrument of power, enhancing the ability of humans to manipulate, control, and impose themselves on their environment. The contemporary use of technology performs a similar function |
| Interpersonal alliances, networks, and control of 'informal organisation' | Friends in high places, sponsors, ethnic or cultural affiliations, coalitions of people prepared to trade support and favours to further their individual ends, and informal networks for touching base, sounding out, or merely shooting the breeze – all provide a source of power to those involved |
| Control of counter organisations | Whenever a group of people manages to build a concentration of power, it is not uncommon for opposing forces to coordinate their actions to create a rival power block. Trade unions are the most obvious example of counter organisations |
| Symbolism and the management of meaning | One's ability to persuade others to enact realities that further the interests one wishes to pursue. Leadership ultimately involves an ability to define the reality of others |
| Gender and the management of gender relations | It often makes a great deal of difference if you're a man or a woman. Many organisations are dominated by gender related values that bias organisational life in favour of one sex over another. It is sometimes called the 'glass ceiling' effect |
| Structural factors that define the stage of action | A manager may control an important budget, have access to key information, and be excellent at impression management, but her ability to draw on and use these sources of power is underpinned by various structural factors, such as intercorporate power plays or an impending merger that will eliminate her job |
| The power one already has | Power is a route to power, and one can often use power to acquire more. Power used in a judicious way takes the form of an investment and, like money, often becomes useful on a rainy day |

**Table 2-4: Power (Yukl 1998)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Formal authority | Power stemming from formal authority is sometimes called legitimate power. Authority is based on perceptions about the prerogatives, obligations, and responsibilities associated with particular positions in an organisation or social system. |
| Control over resources and rewards | This control stems in part from formal authority. The higher a person's position in the authority hierarchy of the organisation, the more control over scarce resources the person is likely to have. |
| Control over punishments | This form of power is sometimes called coercive power. The formal authority system of an organisation and its traditions deal with the use of punishment as well as of rewards. |
| Control over information | This type of power involves both the access to vital information and control over its distribution to others. Some access to information results from a person's position in the organisation's communication network. |
| Ecological control | An important source of leader influence is control over the physical environment, technology, and organisation of the work. Manipulation of these physical and social conditions allows indirect influence over the behaviour of others. |
| Expertise | A major source of personal power is expertise in solving problems and performing important tasks. This form of power is sometimes called expert power. Expertise is a source of power for a person only if others are dependent on the person for advice. |
| Friendship and loyalty | Another source of power is the desire of others to please a person toward whom they feel strong affection. This is sometimes called referent power. People are usually willing to do special favours for a friend, and they are more likely to carry out requests made by someone they greatly admire. |

The essence of leadership is influence over others (Yukl 1998). This is the use of power, but not in the sense of the five clear-cut categories put by French and Raven (1959). Power's initial entry into the modern management literature (e.g. Weber 1947: French & Raven 1959) reflected its embryonic stage of research and conceptualisation. Once power had consolidated its place in the discipline and had undergone significant scrutiny (Bacharach & Lawler 1980), more comprehensive models emerged (e.g. Hardy 1995: Morgan 1997; Pfeffer 1981).

It could be argued that the same power that we experience today in organisations has always existed in the universe. It is just that recent authors, particularly those subsequent to French and Raven, have injected new data from their own research. It is

quite possible that at some time in the future the work of Morgan and Yukl, for example, might be viewed as historical developments.

### 2.3.1 Power's mystical source

Most authors, when attempting to define power, make reference to the model proposed by French and Raven (1959). That model proposed five bases of power: referent, coercive, expert, reward, and legitimate power. These categories define what one person has and what the other person lacks. They define the medium through which one person has power over the other. The difference between the power holder and the person over which power is exercised is the perception of the difference shared by both the power holder and the person who is the object of influence. For example, expert power is reliant on the power holder having more knowledge than the object of influence. If there was no difference in the level of knowledge, there would be no expert power. The five sources of power in the French and Raven (1959) model can be collapsed back to their main constituent, difference (Waters-Marsh 2000).

Power exists as a capacity, not as an object. It does not have any physical dimensions. It does not occupy any space or have any mass. It cannot be seen or photographed. It is not an external phenomenon that can be completely objectified. Its origin appears to lie somewhere in the mental world of those who possess it. Power appears to be filtered through cognitive and emotional processes before it is actualised (Blau 1964; McClelland 1975). Because it cannot be defined in concrete physical terms, its definition is the subject of individual interpretation. Accordingly, there is some conjecture over the nature of power and what it really means to our world (Hardy 1995).

Significant writers in the field (e.g. Foucault 2000; Morgan 1997; Pfeffer 1981) suggest that power's origins are beyond the physical, but their arguments have not articulated its *exact* nature and origin. A comprehensive theory of power in its mental state is not evident in the literature, yet the mental or cognitive origins of power may be central to its influence and role as an independent variable.

### 2.3.2 Attempting to define power

Power is typically held to be a causal phenomenon: its application produces results. Historically, power has been invoked most by conflict theorists (Honderich 1995), although Foucault (2000) moderated that view, arguing that there is somehow power in the system or in the culture that we have inherited, and that power controls us, sometime in deleterious ways.

In order to construct a theory of power, there must be a coherent group of general propositions that are used as principles of explanation. This level of development is problematic when we are dealing with power, because the current group of general propositions is anything but coherent. In general terms, power can be referred to as the capacity that person A has to influence the behaviour of person B, so that B does something she or he would not otherwise do (French & Raven 1959). The French and Raven model proposed different forms of power, which have provided a key framework for understanding behaviour in organisations. Further arguments about the role of contextual settings (Crozier 1973), relationships (Wrong 1968) and the social aspects (Raven & Rubin 1976) have expanded the view that the application of power is context-specific. Other writers, like Bacharach and Lawler (1980), have highlighted its relational, dependency and sanctioning characteristics.

Thompson and Luthans (1983, p. 85) have argued that "power consists of observable, measurable behaviours that can be empirically assessed in an organisational setting. Also, power consists of cognitive perceptions of the environment of which an individual is part", indicating that power is multidimensional. They argue for the need to fully understand the environmental and social context in which power is acted out. Reward and coercive power must be viewed in the context of resources; referent power in terms of the motivation of the target; expert power in terms of the characteristics of the influencer; and legitimate power in terms of the target (Thompson & Luthans 1983).

Foucault (1984) denied that he had ever constructed a *theory* of power. His view was that power must be analysed in its operations and effects and cannot be captured in a systematic set of related concepts conceived in advance of its application. Power must only be analysed in the instances of its exercise. Foucault sees power as being productive in the sense that it is constitutive, working to produce particular types of bodies and minds in practices which remain invisible from the point of view of the older model of power as sovereignty. Power is pluralist: it is exercised from innumerable points, rather than from a single political centre, as the possession of an elite or the logic of bureaucratic institutions, and is not governed by a single over-arching project (Nash 2000).

Barnes (1988) has argued that it is more legitimate to consider power as an abstract phenomenon. It is only in its empirical setting that it can be considered in concrete terms. Astley and Sachdeva (1984) concur, arguing that organisational structures were designed to facilitate the application of power, not its theoretical definitions.

Many authors have adopted a general definition of power in terms of the relationship between persons A and B, and what A can make B do. This model appears to fit the requirement for a superficial treatment of this topic, but closer scrutiny (e.g. Astley and Sachdeva 1984; Barnes 1988; Dunford 1992; Thompson & Luthans 1983) reveals just how inadequate this treatment is.

More recent debate (Feldman 1999) is critical of the rationalist perspective apparent in the post-industrial era paradigm. Building on Foucault, Feldman argues that power is a kind of social production process through which collective meaning is created and maintained. It is created and maintained in knowledge. Knowledge, then, becomes an instrument of power that people use in making sense of the world without fully grasping its implications. Thus, rationality is a construct created by persons attempting to make sense of their world. But the rationality is not necessarily real. Definitions of power, which imply rational decision making about goals and objectives, must therefore be suspect (Waters-Marsh 2000). In Foucault's view it is power itself that creates the reality, and the illusion of any rationality is a construct developed to support the power creating the reality (Foucault 2000).

Morgan (1997) remains unclear as to whether power should be understood as an interpersonal behavioural phenomenon or as the manifestation of deep-seated structural factors. He concluded that "it is not clear whether people have and exercise power as autonomous human beings or are simply carriers of power relations that are the product of more fundamental forces" (Morgan 1997, p. 199).

The literature tends to qualify discussions on power as being either at the theoretical or empirical levels. At the theoretical level, it is proposed that no universal definition is possible (Hardy 1995), whereas in the empirical arena, any definition is context

specific and not transferable (Barnes 1988; Hardy 1995; Pfeffer 1981). Hardy (1995) in particular puts the onus on the researcher to define the contextual setting of power. While Hardy advocates selectivity, Martin and Frost (1996) advise caution at being too selective, as that would tend to obscure some of the details that might be conducive to inductive reasoning.

Morgan (1997) cites 14 examples (Table 2-3) of what he considers to be the most important sources of power. He reinforces the argument that recent debate has failed to arrive at a clear and consistent definition of power. While some view it as a resource, others view it as a social relation characterised by some kind of dependency. While Morgan has identified numerous examples of the source and use of power, he maintains that it is difficult to clearly define exactly what it is. He likens his description as a working tool that can be used for the analysis of organisational politics. As a result, Morgan has defined all power under the single category of *sources of power.*

The most widely cited research on power is the French and Raven (1959) model, which identified five common and important types of power. Each of these types of power increases the leader's capacity to influence the attitudes, values, or behaviours of others. Building on this view, Northouse (2001) argues that in organisations there are two major kinds of power: *position power* and *personal power.* Position power refers to the power a person derives from the organisations structure, such as their position or rank in a formal organisational system. Personal power refers to the power a leader derives from followers. When leaders act in ways that are important to followers, it gives leaders power.

While the notion of power is well documented (French & Raven 1959; Hardy 1995; Morgan 1997), its exact meaning remains open to contextual interpretations (Hardy 1995; Pfeffer 1981). Our current level of knowledge seems to suggest that we know that power exists, but we can't describe what it is. Indeed, the essence of what power is, or its defining properties, remains the subject of much debate and conjecture (Freeman 1999; Hardy 1995; Mitchell et al. 1997; Shah 1998).

The literature on power is divided between the theoretical world and empirical experience (Barnes 1988; Hardy 1995; Morgan 1997; Pfeffer 1981). No universal definition is possible at the theoretical level and any empirical definition is context specific.

Theoretical discussions on power are consistent with the nature of the metaphysical world (Bullock & Trombley 2000; Honderich 1995; Macey 2000). Power at the theoretical level is a most general and abstract phenomenon. The reviewed literature attempted to provide a comprehensive account of what power is, but inevitably the authors conclude that no universal definition is possible.

The incoherent debate surrounding the notion of theoretical power is strikingly similar to that of metaphysics. Metaphysics is concerned about more abstract ideas, about space and time, about substance and attribute, and about universals and particulars. Because the debate is not grounded in the real world, it suffers from real world criticisms. Kant, for example, denied the legitimacy of metaphysics on the ground that the *a priori* elements in thought yield knowledge only if applied to the data of experience. Logical positivists maintain that sentences ostensibly about the world are not even significant unless susceptible of empirical verification (Bullock & Trombley

2000). The ontology of *theoretical power* and *metaphysics* is characterised by not occupying any concrete space or time.

Empirical discussions on power are consistent with the physical world, and the physical world has many dimensions. This thesis takes the French and Raven (1959) model as representative of the introduction of power into the modern management literature. At that time, a simple model of five categories of power described its physical existence. However, when we review the model proposed by Morgan (1997), for example, it reveals far greater complexity. Through his more complex model Morgan reveals the better understanding that we have of organisational process compared to that of the 1950s. But *process* is a physical activity in the real world, and the empirical descriptions of power are linked to physical activities. It is therefore reasonable to assume that with any growth in physical activities, there will be a corresponding growth in the use or application of power.

In summary, the current management literature has not provided a conclusive definition of power. At best, there is discussion that it is not an object but a capacity. Morgan (1997) argues that the origin of power could be either internal (people have and exercise power as autonomous human beings) or external (people are simply carriers of power relations that are the product of more fundamental forces) to the individual. The theoretical model for this thesis is based on the notion that power originates in the metaphysical world, passes through various 'gates' into the physical world, where it is then applied in an organisational context.

### 2.3.3 The application of power

The application of power is another element that needs to be explored. Many have argued that theoretical (metaphysical) meanings of power have limited 'real world'

application (Barnes 1988; Hardy 1995; Pfeffer 1981; Thompson & Luthans 1983; Wrong 1968). However, this is not to suggest that theoretical discussions *per se* are meaningless. It is from a solid theoretical basis that meaningful research will evolve (Bacharach 1989; Van de Ven 1989; Whetten 1989).

The organisational use of power has many dimensions. Some managers and leaders even deny that it happens in their organisations. But it does take place, however, as people seek power and often use political means to attain it (Armstrong 1999). There is no clear starting point to this debate, apart from leaders' use of their dominance to advance their position. For those who have the skills to do so, opportunities usually present themselves for influencing the minds of others through various persuasive tactics. In this way, the legitimacy of power can be manipulated to serve the interests of the dominant elite by creating an environment in which lower-order agents willingly comply with directives (Hardy 1995).

Skilled and persuasive entrepreneurs can create loyalty in their followers by giving energy, purpose and commitment to the organisations they are creating through the concepts of symbolism, language, ideology, beliefs, rituals and myths. In the minds of their target audience, they create legitimacy for their own demands and de-legitimise the demands of others. The key factor in this exercise seems to be that the leader must create a convincing argument in the minds of the followers that loyalty to the leader and their agenda is the best option available to them (Pettigrew 1979).

Pfeffer (1981) corroborates Pettigrew's argument by demonstrating how political language and symbols are used for mobilising support and quieting opposition. Pfeffer distinguishes between substantive outcomes and the attitudes, beliefs, norms and values that are generated around them. He suggests that the two may be loosely

coupled. Decisions can be rationalised with little regard to the actual specifics of the decision by using a persuasive argument to impact the attitudes and beliefs of organisational participants. Some leaders will use political language and symbolic activity to rationalise and justify decisions. In reality, these discussions are largely the result of power and influence in order to make those results acceptable and legitimate in the organisation. In other words, in the minds of the stakeholders, the activity is in their best interests. Without this process, the exercise of power is limited (Pfeffer 1981).

While Pfeffer puts what many believe is a credible argument on how power is used to neutralise opposition to decisions and outcomes, Hardy (1995) suggests that Pfeffer failed to recognise the potential for power to be used to pre-empt opposition. Power can be used to that end in the management of an organisation's culture. Senior management are able to control or sustain a culture through the organisation's selection practices, the actions of top management and the organisation's socialisation methods. In addition to the socialisation and training process, culture is transmitted to employees through stories, rituals, material symbols and language (Robbins & Barnwell 1998). All of these factors are under the control of leaders, who design their organisation to suit their interests.

Clegg (1989) argues that managerial paradigms have not been expanded sufficiently to capture unknown structures, cultures and technologies. He asserts that most researchers have structured their arguments to fall within the parameters of well-established precedence. Ranson et al. (1980) also highlight the lack of understanding of the variations in structural arrangements of organisations, indicating areas for further research and understanding.

If a researcher were to adopt a more critical view of power, ideology and organisational narrative, it might serve to add further knowledge to the structural arrangements within organisations (Mumby 1987). Mumby found that narratives are one of the principal forms through which organisational ideology and power structures are both expressed and constituted. They punctuate and sequence events in such a way as to privilege a certain reading of the world. They impose an order on 'reality' in the minds of other organisational participants through constructing an ideology that privileges certain interests over others. For example, Frost and Egri (1991) describe how politics can be used to persuade organisational participants to maintain the *status quo*. Innovative proposals might not proceed purely on the basis of their technical or societal merit. As various stakeholders sense change, they use their power to stymie that process if the innovation is perceived to be against their interest (Hay & Hartel, 2001).

An organisational outcome is usually determined or controlled by an individual or a coalition in the pursuit of their interests (Robbins & Barnwell 1998). While the nature of the power being used is important, other factors such as who is using it, why they are using it and how they are using it are also significant. There is nothing apparent in any of the reviewed literature to indicate that a simple formula can be used to predict or control outcomes. The variables might consist of the type of power being used, the management function and style employed, and the organisational context.

Alvesson (1984) and Clegg (1989) argue that much of the published research is epistemologically flawed. Without questioning the *status quo*, other researchers accepted organisational structures at face value. They did not question the rationality of those structures, which were largely representative of a one-dimensional or non-

dialectic society, where the existing paradigm was dominated by the prevailing ideology. The result was that phenomena embedded in structures beyond that paradigm were never identified. At best, Alvesson (1984) argues that power was investigated in terms of influence and authority. The legitimacy of the phenomena that facilitate power and the legitimacy of the exercise of power escaped scrutiny. The possibility of other human or structural factors contributing to the organisational architecture was also excluded from the debate.

Hindess (1982) argues that the oversimplification of the analysis of power and interests inhibits further inquiry into the conditions in which these practices and struggles take place. As with many debates, the answer that we get depends on the question that we ask, and therefore the concepts on which those questions depend. If the researcher is unable to penetrate the deep structures in which power is exercised, the questions that they ask are usually framed around what they can see, and what they can see might be only part of the truth. In that case, the analysis is made on the basis of incomplete information (see Hindess 1982).

In light of the arguments presented by Alvesson, Hindess and Hardy, one might reasonably conclude that much of the available research on power indicates the analysis of surface-level phenomena. The more significant details within the deep organisational structures or human factors remain obscured. Clearly, if that is the case, then we must seriously question the comprehensiveness of existing paradigms. For this reason, the current research will continue to explore the issue of whether power is embedded within an observable organisational structure or if it is contained within some unknown human factor of the individual agents.

The external perspective of an organisation might not reveal all of the salient details that constitute the dynamics of organisational process, particularly the use of power. The internal perspective might also be limited in its revelations, depending on the observer's position and access to information. Furthermore, some leaders might tend to mask their activities. While too much use of power might lead to some obvious problems, Pfeffer (1992) argues that too little use of power can be equally destructive. Pfeffer asserts that it requires both skill and will to use power. If, for example, senior management appear reluctant to use power to implement organisational change, it creates an opportunity for middle management to exercise their power to resist change (Hay & Hartel, 2001; Rothstein 1995). Resistance to change, however, is not limited to middle management. The misuse of power by influential stakeholders could also anchor the organisation to some point in history, causing it to become out of touch (Allen & Porter 1983). Resistance to change is not the only power that might be exercised by a stakeholder. Their power might extend to any action intended to satisfy self-interest at the expense of organisational performance (Allen & Porter 1983).

Power appears to be a dynamic phenomenon, leaving no voids in organisational environments. Where some managers might withdraw their power, or appear reluctant to use it, others see this as an opportunity to increase their power (Hickson et al. 1971). The opportunity to use power is facilitated to some degree by the organisation's contextual setting, and the contextual setting could be anything. It could have cultural imperatives that must be satisfied or it might exist as an institution that has no clear objectives. It might also have political or religious criteria that guide its actions. Any uncertain, resource-scarce environment is conducive to entrepreneurs conveniently presenting themselves as 'the guiding light' (Crozier 1973; Hinings et al. 1974; Salancik & Pfeffer 1977). The opportunity for the use of power is also present

if the organisation is dependent on resources from some other agency or coalition (Benfari et al. 1986; Pfeffer & Salancik 1974).

In addition, power is a double-edged sword. It can have either good or bad consequences, depending on the organisational circumstances. Numerous researchers feel that the use of power is a negative phenomenon (Gandz & Murray 1980; Gray & Ariss 1985; MacMillan 1978; Mintzberg 1984; Narayanan & Fahey 1982; Pfeffer 1992; Schwenk 1989). At the end of the day, any analysis on whether power is good or bad depends on who is using it and how they are using it. If management is using power to achieve sanctioned ends, it is legitimate (Mayes & Allen 1977). On the other hand, if it is being used to accommodate self-serving interests, it is viewed as illegitimate and detrimental to the organisation (Drory & Romm 1989; Gandz & Murray 1980). This highlights the notion that power can be a political construct, but also reveals some details about the mystical nature of the person using it rather than the observable structural factors within the organisation. Also, the extent to which an individual uses power is directly related to the strength of their power base, such as lines of supply, lines of information, and lines of support (Kanter 1979). Kanter argues that sharing power leads to an expansion of the power base. Once an agent has acquired power, its multitude of variables can be reduced to three dimensions: assertiveness, rationality and ingratiation tactics (Kipnis et al. 1980).

To date, the debate on power continues. There remain a number of inconsistent views on where it comes from, what it is and how it exists. Moreover, the debate has not changed substantially over time, from Rousseau (1762), through Weber (1947), French and Raven (1959), Foucault (1950s), Morgan (1997), Yukl (1988), Robbins et al. (2001), and Northouse (2001).

It appears that the theoretical basis of power exists as a constant in the universe in the sense that it has defied any concrete description. Concrete descriptions do exist of power as it is applied in the real world, but they are descriptions that reflect our changing physical world, such as organisational structures and the design of various management and administrative systems, as well as society itself. The voluminous literature on power presents a common theme. Since French and Raven presented their model on power in 1959, subsequent models have not provided new information on the theoretical basis of power, just more detail about the same information as it is applied in context-specific circumstances. Given the evolutionary nature of organisational structures and design and the complexity of human relations, further real-world details are expected to emerge. Notwithstanding this, the literature does not indicate that we should expect any development in the theoretical descriptions of power.

### 2.3.4 Power and metaphysics

The management literature reviewed so far indicates that power exists in at least two domains: power as a capacity to act and power as applied in context specific circumstances. Power, as it is *applied* in organisational settings, is to do with physical reality. On the other hand, power as a *capacity*, is beyond the reach of physical reality. The theoretical dimensions of power lie beyond the world of physical reality, and because they lie 'beyond' or 'after' physical reality, they satisfy the criteria of metaphysics (Van Inwagen & Zimmerman 2000).

As I have argued, the investigation of theoretical power, or of what really exists, appears to have reached a limit in the management literature. The following views illustrate this point:

- Power appears to be filtered through cognitive and emotional processes before it is actualised (Blau 1964; McClelland 1975),

- There is some conjecture over the nature of power and what it really means to our world; no universal definition is possible (Hardy 1995),

- Power consists of cognitive perceptions of the environment of which an individual is part (Thompson & Luthans 1983),

- It is more legitimate to consider power as an abstract phenomenon (Barnes 1988), and,

- It is not clear whether people have and exercise power as autonomous human beings or are simply carriers of power relations that are the product of more fundamental forces; it is difficult to clearly define exactly what it is (Morgan 1997).

There has been little, if any, investigation of the theoretical meanings of power through rational argument in the management literature. Management scholars appear to come to an abrupt halt in what they say about power at the metaphysical/physical divide. However, there are at least two disciplines, philosophy and neuroscience, that attempt an analysis of the world beyond physical reality, the world that exists in the minds of individuals. Not only is there little known about the origin of thoughts and ideas within the mind of an individual, the transfer of those phenomena to the physical world through the mind-body connection is another area that is not clearly explained in the management literature. If it is the case that power originates from the metaphysical world, it would explain why it has no solid theoretical basis.

There are at least two things about the metaphysical world that might impact on our understanding of power. First, we need to know what the metaphysical world is (which we do not) and we need to know how the metaphysical world is connected to the physical world (which remains a mystery). In other words, if it is the case that power is transferred from the mind to the body, we need to know how and why this process occurs, particularly as this research will assume it to be an independent variable. Underpinning this inquiry is the debate on mind-body connectivity, which has been the topic of debate among philosophers for centuries.

For example, Rene Descartes argued that minds and bodies are as fundamentally different as things could be. The mind is not part of the physical world at all. Physical things are extended: they take up space, and they are not conscious. Our minds, on the other hand, are conscious, and do not take up space. Descartes theorises the connection between the immaterial world and the material world on the basis that there is a two way causal connection between them. On the one hand the physical world affects one's mind, and states of mind affect the body and, through it, the wider world. Gilbert Ryle challenged Descartes' theory on the basis that if a person's mind is beyond physical recognition, then we cannot know any mind but our own. Another question raised about Descartes' theory between mental and physical events is that many philosophers have found the whole idea of an interaction between two such different realms completely unintelligible: how could an immaterial mind make contact with a material object in order to affect it or to be affected by it (Perry & Bratman 1993)?

More recently, however, old notions of dichotomy between mind versus brain, nature versus nurture, have been supplanted by a rich web of synergistic relations between

mind and brain, nature and nurture. According to modern neuroscience, this means that all mental phenomena are assumed to be the result of biological activity of neuronal circuits in the brain. The development of these circuits relies in part on genetic programs, but is also heavily dependent on the individual's experiences within the environment (Pally 2000). Pally goes on to explain the cellular architecture of the brain, evolution of the human brain, and the genetic and environmental influences on brain development.

Pally (2000) leads the reader through an authoritative explanation of how the brain functions according to neuroscience, eventually arriving at the final chapter on human consciousness. However, at the heart of human experience, the question of consciousness has captured the interest of philosophers, and in no other area of neuroscience is the philosophical as intertwined with the scientific. There is a growing consensus that whatever consciousness is, it is not a unitary thing, but a class of phenomena that includes several different states, all having in common the general property of being aware. Philosophers and neuroscientists emphasise that understanding 'subjectivity', the experience of being conscious, is the 'hard' problem in contrast to the 'easy' problem of describing the neurophysiology and neuroanatomy of consciousness (Pally 2000). It would appear that neuroscience offers little by way of explaining how and why power, in the mind of an individual, causes that individual to act. The cause and effect relationship between power as capacity and power as an action remains unexplained.

David Hume (*A Treatise of Human Nature* – 1793) pondered the notion of *cause* and *effect*, arguing that "Tis impossible to reason justly, without understanding perfectly the idea concerning which we reason; and 'tis impossible perfectly to understand any

idea, without tracing it up to its origin, and examining that primary impression, from which it arises" (Van Inwagen & Zimmerman 2000, p. 221).

Thomas Reid's (*Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind* – 1788) perception was that power can only come from an object that is capable of cognitive processes, arguing "That active power is an attribute, which cannot exist but in some being possessed of that power, and the subject of that attribute, I take for granted as a self-evident truth. Whether there can be active power in a subject which has no thought, nor understanding, no will, is not so evident...." (Van Inwagen & Zimmerman 2000, p. 226).

Bertrand Russell (*The Analysis of Mind* – 1921) argued that a simple cause and effect relationship, where A was always followed by B, was fundamentally erroneous. While traditional views held that A is usually followed by B, the *laws of change* suggest otherwise. The notion that A always precedes B prescribes that A is an invariable antecedent. Russell argues that in practice we cannot obtain an antecedent that is invariable, for this would require an account of the entire universe, since an element that was not considered might prevent the expected effect. It is not possible to distinguish among nearly invariable antecedents, one as *the* cause, and the others as merely its concomitants. The attempt to do this depends upon a notion of cause that is derived from will, and will is not at all the sort of thing it is generally supposed to be, nor is there any reason to think that in the physical world there is anything even remotely analogous to what will is supposed to be. If we could find one antecedent, and only one, that was *quite* invariable, we could call that one *the* cause without introducing any notion about mistaken ideas about will. Russell concludes that we

cannot find any antecedent that is invariable, and we can find many that are nearly so (Van Inwagen & Zimmerman 2000, p. 227-229).

On the basis of the reviewed literature, there is every indication that power probably originates from within the cognitive world of the beholder. This research proposes that it is then transported to the physical world through the mind–body connection, where it is then able to be observed as 'the use of power'. This research also takes the view that power can and should be viewed in the context of a cause and effect relationship, where cause is the antecedent, and the application of power in context specific circumstances is the effect.

The key to our understanding of power could be in understanding the process that governs either the cognitive world of the individual, or the relationship between the metaphysial-physical divide (if, in fact, there is a divide). In the metaphysical world, nobody knows what power is (or what anything is, for that matter), and in the physical world there are as many descriptions as there are applications of power and the authors who are writing about it.

It could be that in 1959 French and Raven discovered five 'windows' through which power passed from the metaphysical world into the physical world. In 1997 Morgan discovered fourteen windows and in 1998 Yukl discovered seven slightly different windows.

If we take the view that the origins and definitions of power are within the domain of metaphysics, this exposes the debate to attack from logical positivists and others whose orientation is inclined toward questions about physical reality (which, after all, is the domain of management practitioners). The problem with physical reality is that it is confined to the physical world, but the *cause* of the matter that this research

investigates is conceived, created, moulded, determined, and transmitted, from the unknown. What we are left to analyse is a phenomenon whose origin and nature defies analysis, and whose use and application can be anything consistent with the complexity of human nature and the universe.

There are two things that this analysis has revealed about power. Firstly, we do not know the nature of its metaphysical origin (if indeed that is the true source) and, secondly, we do not know the nature of the mechanism through which it is actualised. There is general agreement that the mind controls the body, and hence our actions. Some of the world's greatest philosophers remain uncertain of the relationship between the mind and the body and the nature of the mind itself.

If this is the case, the current research paradigms on power must be seriously questioned, because it would appear that the body of management knowledge and research that exists on power is based on empirical observations of physical phenomena. From those 'real world' observations, inductive reasoning has apparently been used in an attempt to describe what power is. Little wonder, then, that there is no agreement on what power is.

The current research is anchored in this complexity of people, motives, structures and cultures. Given that the discipline of Organisational Behaviour purports to 'predict and control' behaviour in organisations, it remains challenging to understand how management science might equip a manager to 'predict and control' metaphysical phenomena, particularly when the minds of those managers might be firmly rooted in the world of physical reality.

### 2.3.5 Power as an independent variable

The reviewed literature on power reveals that many writers consider it to be an independent variable (e.g. Astley & Sachdeva 1984; Crozier 1973; Hardy 1995; Hickson et al. 1971). For a phenomenon to be considered as an independent variable, it is usually hypothesised to be the causal influence (Zikmund 2000). For the current research, power is taken to be the independent variable that controlled or influenced the outcomes in the case studies (See Table 2-5 here and Figure 2-1 on page 79).

**Table 2-5: Types of Power (The independent variable)**

| |
|---|
| 1. Coercive |
| 2. Reward |
| 3. Persuasive |
| 4. Knowledge |
| 5. Position |
| 6. Personal |
| 7. Expert |
| 8. Opportunity |

## 2.4 Management or leadership

At this point it is important to note that this research is about management, not leadership. There is a fundamental difference between management and leadership (Kotter 1999, 1990; Northouse 2001; Yukl 1998; Zaleznik 1998). Kotter (1999) argues that his observations of leadership behaviour do not fit into clear categories such as planning, organising, controlling and directing. He concludes that much of the behaviour ends up as 'none of the above' (see Table 2-6).

Leadership complements management, it does not replace it, and in some cases the roles are overlapping. When managers are involved in influencing a group to achieve

its goals, they are involved in leadership. When leaders are involved in planning, organising, staffing, and controlling, they are involved in management. Both processes involve influencing a group of individuals toward goal attainment (Northouse 2001).

**Table 2-6: Management or Leadership**
(Source: Kotter 1999, pp. 52-54)

| | Leadership | Management |
|---|---|---|
| Creating an agenda | Establishing direction – developing a vision for the future, often the distant future, and strategies for producing the changes needed to achieve that vision. | Planning and budgeting – establishing detailed steps and timetables for achieving needed results, and then allocating the resources necessary to make that happen. |
| Developing a human network for achieving the agenda | Aligning people – communicating the direction by words and deeds to all those whose cooperation may be needed so as to influence the creation of teams and coalitions that understand the vision and strategies, and accept their validity. | Organising and staffing – establishing some structure for achieving plan requirements, staffing that structure with individuals, delegating responsibility and authority for carrying out the plan, providing policies and procedures to help guide people, and creating methods or systems to monitor implementation. |
| Execution | Motivating and inspiring – energising people to overcome major political, bureaucratic, and resource barriers to change by satisfying very basic, but often unfulfilled, human needs. | Controlling and problem solving – monitoring results vs. planning in some detail, identifying deviations, and then planning and organising to solve these problems. |
| Outcomes | Produces change, often to a dramatic degree, and has the potential of producing extremely useful change. | Produces a degree of predictability and order, and has the potential of consistently producing key results expected by various stakeholders. |

Managers' goals arise out of necessities, rather than desires. Skilled managers excel at diffusing conflicts between individuals or departments, placating all sides while ensuring that an organisation's day-to-day business gets done. Managers deal with complexity. Leaders, on the other hand, adopt personal, active attitudes towards goal achievement. They look for the potential opportunities and rewards that lie around the corner, inspiring subordinates and firing up the creative process with their own energy. Leaders focus on change and the future. Their relationships with their

employees and co-workers are intense, and their working environment is, consequently, often chaotic (Zaleznik 1998). It requires adopting a holistic paradigm toward the organisation and its people that reflects a "Full Range" of leadership development and potential (Avolio 1999).

This research is focused on the management practices in four Aboriginal organisations, but by Mintzberg's (1973) definition, this must include some leadership activities. For that reason, leadership is discussed, as leadership and management are complementary spheres of activity. However, the parameters are restricted because there are limited opportunities for managers to perform this function while their activities come under the auspices of a Board of Directors or the Director General of a Government Department.

The manager who was studied for Case 1 (the AHS) was a public servant and an employee of Queensland Health. There was a clearly defined chain of command from his immediate supervisor (who had her office in the same building) through to the Director General. The rules, regulations, policies and procedures of Queensland Health either restricted or prescribed his activities.

For Case 2, the organisation was governed by a Board of Directors. All important matters relating to policy and public relations were referred to the Board. There were clearly defined lines of authority and responsibility, with the manager being in constant communication with the Board for all important decisions.

Case 3 indicated even further influence of the Board of Directors on the public image of the radio station. Some of the decisions regarding style of music and the political commentary were prescribed by the Board.

Case 4 indicates that the manager's every action was controlled by Bruce of the Board. While the literature indicates that leadership and management are overlapping functions, this study is an example of that practice being taken to the extreme to the extent that Bruce also made the majority of the management decisions.

## 2.5 Management functions

On the basis of the reviewed literature (Clarke & Clegg 2000, Clegg & Hardy 1999, Hardy 1995; Morgan 1997; Pfeffer 1981), management functions are hypothesised to be an important variable in the application of power. A review is now presented of the functions performed by managers from the perspective of a broad range of literatures using Mintzberg's (1973) management functions as a central theme.

### 2.5.1 Figurehead

A manager is a person who commands respect from followers and is engaged in interorganisational politics (Lubatkin et al. 1997) as well as social and legal functions (Mintzberg 1973). In effect this appointment serves as the public face of the organisation.

By virtue of his/her position as the head of an organisation, every manager must perform some duties of a ceremonial nature. Mintzberg found that chief executives spent 12% of their contact time on ceremonial duties, and 17% of their incoming mail dealt with acknowledgements and requests related to their status. Duties that involve interpersonal roles may sometimes be routine, involving little serious communication and no important decision making. Nonetheless, they are important to the smooth functioning of an organisation and cannot be ignored by the manager (Mintzberg & Quinn 1991).

### 2.5.2 Leader

To Mintzberg, leadership is an important element of effective management. It provides the driving force to select, train and motivate staff (Dixon 1997; Mintzberg 1973) and to define the results that the organisation must achieve (Ulrich et al. 1999). The manager realises the organisation's goals by becoming closely involved with subordinates, guiding them to achieve those goals (Dixon 1997). At times, those human resource decisions can be all consuming (Drucker 1998). The manager must have a thorough understanding of the available human resources and provide training and skills development where necessary (Yukl 1998). Managers must accept personal responsibility for achieving the organisation's goals (Lubatkin et al. 1997), taking all necessary actions within their domain (Mintzberg 1973).

### 2.5.3 Liaison

A powerful management tool is networking and communicating to nurture interorganisational relations, which might eventually be translated into the exchange of information, favours or consolidating outside contacts outside the vertical chain of command (Mintzberg 1973). Virtually every study of managerial work found that managers spend about 45% of their time with their peers, 45% with people outside their units, and about 10% with their superiors. Contacts can be with an incredibly wide range of people; subordinates, clients, and business associates; and peers – managers of similar organisations, government and trade union officials, and some independents with no relevant organisational affiliations. These contacts are cultivated largely to find information. In effect, the liaison role is devoted to building up the manager's own external information system – informal, private, verbal, but nonetheless effective (Mintzberg & Quinn 1991).

### 2.5.4 Monitor

Information is power (Pfeffer 1992) and the role of the monitor is to gather all information from any source on anything that might affect the company (Mintzberg 1973). This might include performance-measuring data (Dixon 1997), the economic, cultural and political climate (Yukl 1998), and the forces over which the company has no control (Buttery 1998). Collectively, this information facilitates analysis of the organisation and its competitors.

The manager perpetually scans the environment for information, interrogates their liaison contacts and subordinates, and receives unsolicited information, much of it as a result of the network of personal contacts that were developed. Most of the information that the manager receives in the monitor role is verbal, often in the form of gossip, hearsay, and speculation. Because of their contacts, the manager has a natural advantage in collecting this soft information (Mintzberg & Quinn 1991).

### 2.5.5 Disseminator

Having analysed the internal and external environment, the manager can now use that information to the organisation's advantage. Internal communication (Mintzberg 1973) provides information to designated people, linking them in a communication network for the exchange of ideas and information (see also Dixon 1997). Information might also be exchanged with the external environment. Current and accurate technical information is essential for transformational leadership and strategic planning as well as the more routine task of administration (Buttery 1998; Drucker 1998; Yukl 1998).

In their disseminator roles, managers pass some of their privileged information directly to their subordinates, who would otherwise not have access to it. When subordinates lack easy contact with one another, managers will sometimes pass information from one to another (Mintzberg & Quinn 1991). This places the manager in a position to be able to control the information that subordinates receive and do not receive. In that sense, the manager can become a power broker because information is power in its own right, and the disseminator manager can control the flow of most of the information.

### 2.5.6 Spokesperson

The manager must communicate the organisation's plans and activities with its external environment (Mintzberg 1973), often performing this role as a public relations officer (Yukl 1998).

Managers send some of their information to people outside their units. In addition, as part of their role as spokesperson, every manager must inform and satisfy the influential people who controls their organisation. Chief executives especially might spend great amounts of time with hosts of influencers. Directors and shareholders must be advised about financial performance; consumer groups must be assured that the organisation is fulfilling its social responsibilities, and so on (Mintzberg & Quinn 1991). Because they are trading in information, the manager has the opportunity to control the image that they project of the organisation. It can be either positive or negative, depending on the motives of the manager and close associates.

### 2.5.7 Entrepreneur

Innovation and creativity is how a manager takes advantage of opportunities to design and implement new projects that are of benefit to the organisation (Drucker 1998; Mintzberg 1973). The uncertainty associated with some high-risk projects is reduced through careful planning and correct strategy selection from a range of alternatives (Dixon 1997). The entrepreneur is not shackled by day-to-day housekeeping, but indulges in decision-making at the highest level of conceptual understanding to generate impact rather than technique (Drucker 1998). According to Yukl (1998), decisions that change entrenched technique or procedures are made without hesitation to achieve the established goals. Through constant appraisal, managers identify where strategic or tactical gaps might exist. Ultimately, it is managers who are responsible for implementing plans and project management (Buttery 1998).

As entrepreneur, the manager seeks to improve the unit, to adapt it to changing conditions in the environment. In their monitor role, the manager is constantly on the lookout for new ideas and opportunities. When they appear, the manager initiates a development project that they might supervise personally or delegate that responsibility to a subordinate (Mintzberg & Quinn 1991). The entrepreneur directs the operation of the firm and is usually, but not always, considered to be the owner. The reward for the entrepreneur is profit. The concept of a single entrepreneur owning and running a firm is a theoretical abstraction and in many cases is not an adequate description of reality, but it may provide accurate predictions of actual behaviour. In many companies, ownership and management are distinct. Ownership is usually spread across many individuals and institutions. This is achieved through the holding of transferable shares, which do not imply liability for the debt of the firm. These

characteristics are important and are ignored by the hypothetical construct of the entrepreneur (Bullock & Trombley 2000).

### 2.5.8 Disturbance handler

At times, an unexpected disturbance might interrupt organisational processes, which must be analysed and corrected (Mintzberg 1973). Managers must constantly be on the lookout. They might use trigger mechanisms to warn of potential problems, but for those problems that cannot be avoided, disaster management plans must be in place (Buttery 1998).

While the entrepreneur role describes the manager as the voluntary initiator of change, the disturbance handler role depicts the manager involuntarily responding to pressures. Here change is beyond the manager's control. In effect, every manager must spend much their time responding to high-pressure disturbances. No organisation can be so well run, so standardised, that it has considered every contingency in advance. Disturbances arise not only because poor managers ignore situations until they reach crisis proportions, but also because good managers cannot possibly anticipate all the consequences of the actions they take (Mintzberg & Quinn 1991).

### 2.5.9 Resource allocator

An organisation's goals are achieved through the alignment of its human and material resources to organisational process (Buttery 1998; Dixon 1997; Mintzberg 1973). To a large extent, this is the management of short-run economic performance in matters such as costs and pricing, scheduling, selling, quality control, customer service,

purchasing and training (Drucker 1998; Yukl 1998). These short-term plans have been translated from the long-range strategic plan (Yukl 1998).

Resource allocation is not a purely mechanical or impersonal action. Managers communicate with others in the organisation over whom they have no control in order to share information, meet previously established schedules, solve problems, and achieve objectives; they maintain a smooth working relationship with peers mediating disagreements and conflicts between key rivals (Yukl 1998).

The manager decides who will get what in the organisation. Perhaps the most important resource the manager allocates is his or her own time. Access to the manager constitutes exposure to the organisation's nerve centre and decision maker. The manager is also charged with designing the organisation's structure, that pattern of formal relationships that determines how work is to be divided and coordinated.

Also, as resource allocator, the manager authorises the important decisions of the organisation before they are implemented. By retaining this power, the manager can ensure that decisions are interrelated; all must pass through a single brain. To fragment this power is to encourage discontinuous decision making and a disjoined strategy (Mintzberg & Quinn 1991).

### 2.5.10 Negotiator

It is essential for a manager to have good negotiating skills while making formal arrangements on behalf of the organisation such as contracts, finance, or interorganisational relations (Lubatkin et al. 1997; Mintzberg 1973).

The foundation of a good negotiation process requires the manager to have a positive attitude about the task at hand; an awareness of the negotiating environment, being

particularly alert to the words and body language of the other party; and being accountable for and accepting responsibility for the negotiation's outcome. The ebb and flow of each negotiation will be influenced by the external factors in which the process is situated, just how important the outcome is to each party, and the amount of time that each party can invest in the process (Spegel et al. 1998).

In some environments the negotiation process might have been part of a zero sum game, where an advantage for one side was 'won' through a disadvantage for the other. Modern management advocates a more sophisticated view whereby win-win situations are sought in which both parties stand to gain an advantage. A consistent theme is that effective negotiation requires not just skill and technique, but considerable understanding of the disposition of both parties (Cooper & Argyris 1998).

## 2.6 Universal management paradigms

While there are numerous interpretations of organisational process and context, it is less obvious how these might apply to the understanding of cross-cultural management practices with respect to minority cultures. Indeed, only a few recent management studies (e.g. De Long & Fahey 2000; Kirkman & Shapiro 2001; Lee et al. 2000; Li et al. 2001; Sully De Luque 2000) have even focused on the cross-cultural debate, but these consider major commercial trading partners, such as Japan, Korea and China. The literature that does explore minority indigenous cultures and behavioural patterns to any depth tends to be from the disciplines of anthropology, psychology, psychiatry, and the like (e.g. Hiatt 1984; Kidd 1997; Offer & Sabshin 1991; Walsh & Yallop 1993; Wolfe 1999). Essentially, these are descriptions of a pre-industrial native culture.

The convergence hypothesis argues that as a society undergoes transformation from a pre-industrial to an industrial paradigm its managers will naturally adapt, or converge to, the activities of managers from the more industrialised nations (Lee et al. 2000; Lubatkin et al. 1997). If two societies are already industrialised, they will eventually converge on the one best way of management (Bullock & Trombley 1999).

The universalist hypothesis is endorsed and used by organisations involved in third world economic development programs. For example, the United Nations and the World Bank have for years funded workshops in developing nations on the basis that Western management models are as valid in transitional and less developed nations as they are in developed nations (Lubatkin et al. 1997).

An alternative argument to the universalist hypothesis is presented by Marchese (2001) and his colleagues, who studied management practices in India, Mexico, Poland and the United States. Their aim was to gauge the variations, if any, in the two management practices of empowerment and continuous improvement. They concluded that it is more relevant to consider the local organisational culture of each location rather than the larger societal culture when deciding how to manage employees. They hypothesise that the organisation's staffing process may produce a workforce whose values, beliefs, and expectations differ from those of the surrounding community.

Osland and Bird (2000) have found that sophisticated stereotypes are useful in the initial stages of making sense of complex behaviours within cultures. However, rather than stereotyping cultures somewhere along a continuum, they argue that we can advance our understanding by thinking in terms of specific contexts that feature particular cultural values that then govern behaviours in an organisation. The

complexity of cultures that one encounters does not fall neatly into categories defined by national boundaries.

Morris et al. (1999) have found that conflict management styles differ as a function of cultural values. Chinese managers tend toward an avoiding style while U.S. managers tend toward a competing style. Tapping values such as *conformity* and *tradition* underlies the tendency of Chinese managers to avoid explicit negotiation and workplace conflicts, and *achievement* underlies the tendency of U.S. managers to take a competing approach to workplace conflicts.

There is a contrasting body of literature as to what type of management functions might exist in the case studies, or in a broader sense, Aboriginal management styles in general. The universalist hypothesis has wide support, as does other models that suggest diversity is only to be expected.

### 2.6.1 Management functions as mediating variables

None of the reviewed literature provides any information on the management functions or styles of Australian Aboriginal managers. On that basis, a general finding is applied to this research. Mintzberg's (1973) ten-function model is used because it has wide acceptance in business schools globally and is applicable to Anglo-Australian management functions. All (or at least most) Australian managers perform one or more of those functions. Mintzberg's Management functions, as depicted in Table 2-7, are therefore proposed as an important mediator of the effect of power on organisational outcomes.

It is quite possible that Aboriginal managers do exhibit cultural variables in their lifestyle beyond their role as a manager. However, the scope of this research is

restricted to the management of Aboriginal organisations in the context of Mintzberg's ten-function model. Any management functions, activities or issues that lie beyond Mintzberg's model are not assessed.

**Table 2-7: Management functions (mediating variables)**

| |
|---|
| 1. Figurehead |
| 2. Leader |
| 3. Liaison |
| 4. Monitor |
| 5. Disseminator |
| 6. Spokesperson |
| 7. Entrepreneur |
| 8. Disturbance handler |
| 9. Resource allocator |
| 10. Negotiator |

## 2.7 Leadership style

The managers of the four Aboriginal organisations investigated in this thesis had some autonomy in the execution of their duties, even though they did not occupy leadership positions and at all times were answerable to a higher authority. The presence of autonomy, although limited, allowed them to express their leadership style in the context of their management duties. While the literature supports the broad application of Mintzberg's management functions, it is the style of execution of the leadership function that sets one manager apart from another (Bailey 1988). For example, a manager can perform the function of leader with a style that is autocratic, creates trust, is participative, or based on self-interest.

Research in identifying the styles that make leaders effective is almost as old as recorded history. Bass and Stogdill (Bass 1990) noted that discussions relating to leadership and leadership effectiveness can be found in the Greek and Latin classics,

the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, the writings of ancient Chinese philosophers, and in the early Icelandic sagas.

Yukl (1998) contends that most definitions of leadership assume an action whereby there is intentional influence by one person over others to guide, structure and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organisation. Apart from these general characteristics, the numerous definitions of leadership have little else in common. For example, Yukl cites the following interpretations of leadership:

- Leadership is the initiation and maintenance of structure in expectation and interaction;
- It is the behaviour of an individual when he/she is directing the activities of a group toward a shared goal;
- It is the interpersonal influence exercised in a situation, and directed through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals; and,
- Leaders are those who consistently make effective contributions to social order, and who are expected and perceived to do so; a process of giving purpose (meaningful direction) to collective effort, and causing willing effort to be expended to achieve purpose.

Over a considerable period of time (post 1970 to the present date), the literature has a consistent theme of diversity. For example, Berlew (1974) defines leadership as the process of instilling in others shared vision, creating valued opportunities, and building confidence in the realisation of the shared values and opportunities. Burns (1978) defines leadership as leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that

represent the values and the motivations – of both leaders and followers. Astin and Leland (1993) define leadership as a process by which members of a group are empowered to work together synergistically toward a common goal or vision, that will create change and transform institutions, and thus improve the quality of life. The leader is a catalytic force or facilitator who by virtue of position or opportunity empowers others to collective action accomplishing the goal or vision. Yee, Ashkanasy and Hartel's study (2002) of 22 Australian CEOs found empirical evidence for the incorporation of cultural values into follower's conceptualisations of effective leadership.

Much of the diverse and voluminous literature on leadership has been criticised for being out of touch with the empirical reality of organisational dynamics (Kets de Vries 1994). Fortunately, some emerging literature has a positive theme in that effective leaders fulfil two roles. One is the *charismatic* role (envision, empower and energising behaviour) and the other the more *instrumental* role (such as organisational design, and control and reward functions) (Wilson-Evered, Hartel & Neal, 2001). The demise of many executives can be traced to their lack of interpersonal skills. Many other executives fail because they are technical or organisational lightweights. In a disturbing number of cases, Kets de Vries (1994) found that some leaders simply did not know what was called for: they did not *know* what they did not know. In dysfunctional organisations that have strong cultural inertia, followers are most unlikely to tell the leader that there is something that they don't know.

A special development of leadership research is the leadership of change. Transformational leadership involves implementing change in the organisation by leading from within rather than from out in front; promoting responsibility among

followers through providing higher levels of empowerment in enterprises; not being concerned with power; communicating often and clearly; monitoring the messages they send out; working with people at all stages of implementing new programs and ideas; being committed to instilling a sense of 'belongingness' in workers; achieving credibility through honesty, competence and forward-looking behaviour; and behaving intelligently. Leaders must be acutely aware of the emotional landscape in their organisation and they themselves must possess a high level of emotional intelligence to effectively deal with their staff (Ashkanasy, Hartel & Daus 2001; Cooper & Sawaf 1997).

Goleman (2000) has found that most effective executives use a collection of distinct leadership styles – carefully selecting the right time and place, as well as the degree to which a particular style is applied. Emotional intelligence equips a leader with self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and social skill that guide their actions (Ashkanasy, Hartel & Daus, 2001). The repertoire of skills is flexible in that they are not applied in a prescriptive sense. They facilitate an analysis of the spiritual, emotional and physical environment that precedes the engagement that a leader must make with issues and people.

With such a diverse body of literature, it is difficult to predict the style of leadership that might exist in the organisations chosen for this study. For that reason, the research starts from a basis of no preferred model or style of leadership, but a number of styles that *might* exist on the basis of media reports on the management of some Aboriginal organisations (e.g. Koch 1999, 1996). The study will detect what exists, not what should exist.

The ideal model of transformational leadership put by the likes of Kotter (1990, 1995), Karpin (1995) or Sarros and Butchatsky (1996) might certainly prove to be effective, and they might actually exist in the Aboriginal organisations under study. However, some media reports indicate high levels of political interference, high failure rates, and low levels of efficiency (Devine 1996; O'Brien 1999; Smith 1999a, 1999b). For that reason, the following eleven leadership styles were selected as variables for this study: autocratic, participative, free-reign, altruism, task-motivated, self-interest, socio-independent, relationship-motivated, the creation of trust, disruptive leadership and the creation of uncertainty.

### 2.7.1 Autocratic

The autocratic model has been in existence for thousands of years. During the Industrial Revolution this model was the prominent model of how an organisation should function. The model depends on power.

An autocratic model uses one-way communication – from the top to the workers. Management believes that it knows what is best. The employee's obligation is to follow orders. Employees have to be persuaded, directed, and pushed into performance, and this is management's task. Management does the thinking, and the workers obey the directives. Under autocratic conditions, the workers role is obedience to management.

The autocratic model does work in some settings. Most military organisations throughout the world are formulated on this model. The model was also used successfully in the Industrial Revolution, for example, in building great railroad systems and in operating steel mills.

The autocratic model has a number of disadvantages. Workers are often in the best position to identify shortcomings in the structure and technology of the organisational system, but one-way communication prevents feedback to management. The model also fails to generate strong commitment among the workers to accomplish organisational goals. It also fails to motivate workers to put forth effort to further develop their skills that often would be highly beneficial to the employer (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman 2001).

It is an extreme behaviour, perhaps better described as arrogant. The leader makes a decision without reference to others, tells the subordinates what it is, and then expects them to carry out that decision without question (DuBrin 1998).

### 2.7.2 Participative

The situational theory of leadership asserts that when members have low maturity in terms of accomplishing a specific task, the leader should engage in high-task and low-maintenance behaviours. The leader is most effective when he/she defines the members' roles and tells them how, when, and where to do needed tasks. The task maturity of members increases as their experience and understanding of the task increases. For moderately mature members, the leader should engage in high-task and high-maintenance behaviours. This combination of behaviours is referred to as selling, because the leader should not only provide clear direction as to role and task responsibilities, but should also use maintenance behaviours to get the members to psychologically buy into the decisions that have to be made.

When members' commitment to the task increases, so does their maturity. When members are committed to accomplishing the task and have the ability and knowledge

to complete the task, the leader should engage in low-task and high-maintenance behaviours, referred to as *participating* (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman 2001).

Participative leaders share decision making with group members. All workers who will be involved in the consequences of a decision have an opportunity to provide input. A decision is not considered final until all parties involved agree with the decision. Participative leadership is a democratic process where each member of the group carries a voice (DuBrin 1998). This is closely linked to clan control, which is discussed in Paragraph 2.7.3.

### 2.7.3 Free-reign

For groups in which members are both willing and able to take responsibility for directing their own task behaviour, the leader should engage in low-task and low maintenance behaviours, referred to as delegating. Delegating allows members a free-reign in completing the task (Zastrow & Kirst Ashman 2001).

Free-rein leaders turn over virtually all authority and control to the group or clan. Leadership is provided to the group indirectly rather than directly. Group members are presented a task to perform and are given free rein to figure out how to perform it best (DuBrin 1998). Clan control relies on social values, traditions, shared beliefs, and trust to foster compliance with organisational goals. Employees are trusted, and managers believe that employees are willing to perform correctly without extensive rules or supervision. The leader trusts the employees to perform well, inviting them to participate in defining the organisation's *modus operandi* (Daft 1995).

### 2.7.4 Altruism

Altruism is behaviour that is not self-interested. Human altruism has concerned sociobiologists and social psychologists since about 1970. No uncontroversial technical definition has been agreed (nor of its supposed opposite, 'selfishness'). Sociobiologists typically state that 'costs' of altruistic acts must outweigh benefits – only to then argue that altruism so conceived is mythical, that all apparent altruism covertly benefits the survival of the actor's genes. Altruism is thus, oxymoronically, 'reciprocal'. This debate arose because (like Darwin) sociobiologists assume altruism entails selection *against* the fittest, an evolutionary paradox (Bullock & Trombley 2000).

The psychological basis for altruism is the affective elements of empathy and sympathy. In human relations, benevolence defines moral standards and motivates people to pursue such standards. Benevolence is actualised through the motivation to do good for others, but does not necessary result in action. The hypothesis is directional in that altruism must contain benevolence, but benevolence does not necessarily produce altruistic behaviour (Penner 1995).

The altruistic leader is one who actively seeks to improve the welfare of others. This in effect requires the leader to be the servant of the follower. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve and wants to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The servant-first leader strives to establish an organisational environment in which the followers can pursue personal growth and prosperity. McGinn (1997) advocates altruism for one simple reason: "because goodness is good." Virtue needs no justification: It is its own justification. McGinn's chosen list

of basic virtues consists of kindness, honesty, justice and independence. The leader allows (or encourages) the follower to gain knowledge and power in their own right.

The leader's actions are viewed beyond the organisation to gauge their impact on society (Greenleaf 1977). Even Attila the Hun (when it was either necessary or convenient) also saw some value in being a servant leader: "Leaders must encourage creativity, freedom of action and innovation among their subordinates, so long as these efforts are consistent with the goals of the tribe or nation" (Roberts 1989, p. 62).

### 2.7.5 Self-interest

Self-interest is a legitimate activity if it can be exercised with impunity. In *The Republic*, Plato describes an ideal just society. An argument is presented that justice is merely a compromise between the freedom to do wrong with impunity and to suffer wrong without redress. Because we would risk punitive action by doing wrong, we accept a limitation on our freedom. So justice is a kind of arrangement that is not in itself valuable or desirable, but is put in place to prevent our suffering wrong from others. Plato argues (through one of his characters) that anyone would be a fool not to take full advantage of the power to do wrong with impunity, which suggests that justice is nothing more than a preventive device (Sommers & Sommers 1997).

Ethical egoism is the moral theory that says we ought to act only from self-love. If the object for most of your actions is to please yourself, then you are selfish; if you often want to please others, you are kind. If you want to harm them, you are malicious. Both psychological and ethical egoisms rest on a distorted view of human nature. Most of us are sympathetic and care about the well-being of others (Rachels 1997).

Selfishness is *concern with one's own self-interest* (Rand 1997) and should not be considered a vice. Altruism is a dangerous ideal that engenders guilt and cynicism in those who seek to practice it and impose it on others. It is cynical because most neither practice nor accept the altruistic morality, and it is guilt provoking because they dare not reject it. A responsible concern for one's own interests is the key to happiness and a moral existence (Rand 1997). Psychopaths, however, are able to pursue pleasure with indifference to the suffering of others. Their apparent enjoyment of life seems to count against the thesis that immorality leads to unhappiness (Singer 1997).

### 2.7.6 Task-motivated

People motivate themselves and guide their actions through the exercise of forethought. They anticipate likely outcomes of prospective actions, set goals for themselves, and act to achieve those goals. A desirable goal will usually continue to serve as a reference point for guiding and giving meaning to subsequent mental and physical actions (Curtis 1994).

Morgan (1997) conceives task motivation as task interest, which in turn is a component of a three-part model of organisational interest. Morgan frames his understanding of organisational politics in terms of three interconnected domains relating to one's organisational task, career, and personal life. Task interests (i.e. task motivation) are connected with the work one has to perform. For example, the manager of a production plant is motivated by the requirement to ensure that products are produced in a timely and efficient manner, and an accountant is motivated by the requirement to maintain appropriate records and produce regular accounts. A strong focus on the task at hand is the basis for task-motivated behaviour.

### 2.7.7 Socio-independent

There are times when a leader (such as the Captain of a warship) must be socially isolated from subordinates and even close personal advisors. Great military leaders have often stated that it is lonely at the top. This is not without good reason. Given the nature of some operations, a military leader cannot afford to allow personal relationships to develop with subordinates because this might compromise leadership or command decisions. Under this circumstance, it is only those attributes of the leader relevant to the command function that is experienced by subordinates, while irrelevant personal and human characteristics remain obscured. The only communication is that of an official nature: there is no room for talk about personal matters such as family or friends. No subordinate is allowed to get close to the leader and his/her 'emotional' space (Downey 1977; Gal & Mangelsdorff 1991).

In a civilian context social isolation serves a similar function in that it makes it easier for the leader to maintain secrecy on many issues and to cloud the organisational environment in mystique. Armed with this obscurity, the leader can readily employ disruptive leadership, the creation of trust, the creation of uncertainty, or any other management instrument that is either convenient or necessary at the time.

### 2.7.8 Relationship-motivated

A relationship is the mutual emotional exchange; dynamic interaction; and affective, cognitive, and behavioural connection between two or more persons or systems (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman 2001). The decision-making process of the relationship-motivated leader is based primarily on the social relationship that exists between the leader and the follower. To some degree this goes against the principle of task-motivation, and could have the effect of reduced organisational efficiency.

Maintaining personal friendships or family connections are considered to be in the best long-term interest of the leader. Organisational performance is of lesser concern, especially when the goals and objectives are vague or not easily measured. At the end of the day, it is better to be in charge of a failing organisation, than to not be in charge of a successful organisation.

Even with clearly defined organisational objectives, blatant nepotism was evident in British society through the period of the Industrial Revolution and well into the 20th century. For example, it was common practice for promotions in the Royal Navy to be based more on the candidate's family and social connections than on his seamanship and military skills (Namier 1962).

### 2.7.9 The creation of trust

Trust is not a simple concept. Ideally, from the leader's point of view, followers do not trust the leader purely on the basis of technical skills: they just trust the leader as a person. At the extreme, the relationship shades off into devotion or even love. Both types of relationships reject accountability and prevent a close and impartial scrutiny of the leader's performance (Bailey 1988).

Trust is central to leadership in organisations because followers are people who *choose* to follow leaders. They are not forced to do so. Being trusted by followers allows leaders to lead. Low-trust cultures reduce the willingness of members to follow, which might introduce the need for the leader to use control mechanisms (Fairholm 1998).

Trust is an important element in the foundation of an organisation's work, yet it is one of the most difficult to achieve. Trust is elusive, fragile and essential, and it can

operate at any level within the organisation. Organisations can only become trustworthy if individuals create trust among themselves. At times, building trust within an organisation is a challenge because of staff turnover, and people often come in with their own agenda. Trust is subject to all of the challenges that we associate with relationships in general. Perhaps the most common concern is who makes the first move – who ascribes trust to another person first? (Cufaude 1999).

### 2.7.10 Disruptive leadership

One explanation of disruptive leadership is that it is a logical necessity given events in the real world. The discourse around disruptive leadership considers four possibilities:

- It is not orderly government that requires disruption, but it is the *notion* of orderly government that requires the *notion* of disruption (Bailey 1988). An example is if the CIA covertly causes a small-scale war to break out (or at least a perceived threat of war), with the real possibility that it could escalate into a large-scale conflict that would generate a military response from the United States. This would justify the existence (and an increased budget) for the CIA.

- Disruptive leadership is a manifestation of the leader's disordered personality, such as Shaka Zulu, Hitler, Caesar and Nero. A leader who is both powerful and unhinged can disrupt the orderly routines of business. Leaders who rely on a charismatic appeal will tend to intensify their disruptive activities if they sense that their appeal is on the decline (Bryman 1992).

- Caesarism might be used when things begin to go wrong for the leader and the expectations of the followers are not being fulfilled. The technique is to

uncover intrigues and to punish those alleged to have taken part in plots against the leader. This serves to confirm the leader's ultimate infallibility and explains to some extent the leader's failure to accomplish all that was promised. The convicted plotters become concrete symbols of the evil against which the leader is fighting and serve as mirrors in which the leader's virtue is reflected. Their trials and convictions further disrupt normal routines by making everybody nervous about what is going on and about who next would be accused of being an enemy of the state. Treason trials strengthen the positive image of the leader, demonstrating omniscience, infallibility, and his/her stand on the side of the angels.

- Another disruptive style of leadership is followed by those who see it not as a tactical reaction to abnormal and undesirable features but as a normal and rational strategy for effective leadership. An effective leader is one whose followers consider service to be an end in itself. Therefore, any activity that encourages such devotion is rational, and remains rational even if the activity is one that encourages irrationality on the part of the followers and makes them suspend calculation and rational accounting (Bailey 1988).

### 2.7.11 The creation of uncertainty

When leading the masses, a leader must create *certainty* in their minds. On the other hand, when leading an entourage, a leader is best advised to create *uncertainty* in their minds. The world of the entourage is one of Realpolitik. The entourage are those subordinates who have a regular face-to-face contact with the leader. There is a fine balance between institutional and organisational methods of control and in some cases a leader has no choice but to manipulate his/her entourage.

The provoking of uncertainty has a positive consequence for the leader; it keeps subordinates in their place. To make people uncertain is to deprive them of the capacity to predict. Being unable to anticipate what will happen next, they cannot make plans. The victims feel defenceless and therefore in no position to challenge the leader. Uncertainty intimidates an entourage and lowers the capacity to take independent action against the leader (Bailey 1988).

Uncertainty also has a positive application in the organisational learning process through embracing a much more fluid sense of intelligence that uses, embraces, and at times creates uncertainty as a resource for new patterns of development (Morgan 1997).

### 2.7.12 Leadership style as mediating variables

This section does not deal with the leadership of organisations *per se*, but only the style of execution of the leadership function of the manager (Mintzberg 1973), because it is the style of execution of that function that sets one manager apart from another. For the purpose of analysing the data from the case studies, the proposed mediating variable lists eleven examples of leadership styles (See Table 2-8: Leadership styles (mediating variables).

In reality, any of the ten management functions could be exercised through any of the eleven leadership styles. What is clear in the literature reviewed so far is that there is no single argument that can explain the wide variety of characteristics and styles of leaders. Leadership style, like power, appears to be as much about individual characteristics as it is about science.

**Table 2-8: Leadership styles (mediating variables)**

| |
|---|
| 1. Autocratic |
| 2. Participative |
| 3. Free-rein |
| 4. Altruism |
| 5. Self-interest |
| 6. Task-motivated |
| 7. Socio-independent |
| 8. Relationship-motivated |
| 9. The creation of trust |
| 10. Disruptive leadership |
| 11. The creation of uncertainty |

## 2.8 Role of the organisational context

While *power*, *management functions*, and the *leadership style* of those management functions, to a large extent influence what an organisation's outcome might be, definitions of the use of power are context specific and not transferable (Barnes 1988; Clegg & Hardy 1999; Foucault 1994; Hardy 1995; Morgan 1997; Pfeffer 1981). Organisational context is therefore seen as an important mediating variable. For example, army generals in time of war have much more power at their disposal to influence outcomes than they do in peace, even though they command the same organisation, personnel and equipment. The contextual setting for an organisation could be anything, such as war, peace, politics, religion or institutional imperatives. There is an argument (Bailey 1988; Buchanan & Badham 1999) that much of what happens in dealing with organisational context and outcome is highly political, based to a large degree on the agenda of the leader.

The organisational process can be used to facilitate altruism or self-interest and it can be used to do good or bad. The argument of whether or not an outcome is good or bad

is in the eye of the beholder. A stakeholder analysis (Mitchell et al. 1997) might reveal whose interests are being served and by what mechanisms and resources.

More specifically, the reviewed literature on power (see Section 2.3) argues that power can only be viewed in context specific circumstances. The reviewed management literature does not deal with the context of Australian Aboriginal organisations or their management, so the proposed contextual settings that will be used to analyse the organisations are drawn from media reports concerning the management practices in some Aboriginal organisations (Devine 1996; O'Brien 1999; Smith 1999a, 1999b). The issues raised in those reports include questions of why people continue to follow suspect leaders; what values, beliefs and customs exist in those organisations; are they genuine organisations or family institutions; are they based on Aboriginal religion or political reality; and are the operating environments clouded in political science or political magic?

### 2.8.1 The disposition to follow

Group norms offer a possible explanation as to why organisational members continue to follow their managers even when media reports suggest a less than ideal workplace. Norms at the individual level are perceptions about what is expected of the individual under specified circumstances. Norms are not only rules about behaviour in a group, but also ideas about patterns of behaviour. The ideas cannot be inferred directly from behaviour, but must be learned. At the group level, norms (or the normative system) are the organised and largely shared ideas about what members should do and feel, how they should be regulated, and what sanctions should be applied when behaviour does not coincide with them. Group norms function to regulate the performance of a group as an organised unit, keeping it on course toward its objectives (Napier &

Gershenfeld 1999). At an individual level, norms turn organisational members into followers.

A follower is someone who accepts guidance and, on receiving it, takes the appropriate action. A nonfollower is one who takes initiatives on his or her own behalf and acts without being told what to do. Bailey (1988) suggests four follower dispositions:

- The *apathetic* disposition is characterised by being unconcerned with values and ideals and with each other, their attentions are focussed inward on themselves and their survival, they are without self-confidence and self-respect, they descend through theft and the betrayal of their comrades, culminating in a stupor of resignation and helplessness and a total loss of will.

- The *regimented* disposition is indicated by one who waits for guidance and obeys orders; they obey those orders meticulously; they do not exercise their judgement, they only comprehend the orders.

- The *mature* disposition indicates that the followers have confidence in themselves, in their fellows, in the social system that coordinates their actions, and in the values and beliefs that underlie their social system. They share in the enterprise, including its triumphs and its failures.

- The *anarchic* disposition arises when followers turn their back on the organisation. It is characterised by the refusal to lend their intelligence to their organisation and their occasionally disruptive behaviour is a form of disservice to the organisation and disrespect for its leaders. The anarchy emerges from a

failure of leadership. The follower is pursuing self-sufficiency and the rejection of another's guidance.

These are ideal models. Most individuals usually exhibit a mixture of these qualities and that mixture is dynamic ranging along a continuum from apathetic to anarchic. The leader's task is to detect the followers' disposition mix and their position along that continuum.

On the basis of anecdotal evidence (Devine 1996; O'Brien 1999; Smith 1999a, 1999b), it is anticipated that the followers in Aboriginal organisations might cluster toward the apathetic disposition, while their managers might tend to be regimented or mature. It is unlikely that the anarchic disposition is indicated, because logically, that would mean the individual would cause the displeasure of the leaders (Board of Directors) or the manager, resulting in their dismissal from the organisation. The anarchic disposition might be present in some of the managers who have ulterior motives.

### 2.8.2 Values, beliefs and customs

There are varying styles of leadership that suit certain cultures. Peoples' expectations of their leaders are influenced by their values (how the world should be), beliefs (how the world is) and customs (how one conducts oneself under the guidance of a particular set of values and beliefs). The combination of values, beliefs and customs forms the basis of one's culture. However, a leader does have some room to manoeuvre because a culture is not static. A leader can influence the values and beliefs of the followers by constructing the reality that s/he wants them to see. Two such examples are Gandhi and Hitler (Bailey 1988).

Hofstede (1984) defines values as a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affairs over others, and culture as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one human group from another. Culture in this context includes values; and values are among the building blocks of culture.

Smith (2001) presents three models of culture; according to their aims

- To refer to the intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic development of an individual, group or society.
- To capture a range of intellectual and artistic activities and their products (film, art, theatre).
- To designate the entire way of life, activities, beliefs, and customs of a people, group, or society.

Bailey (1988), Hofstede (1984) and Smith (2001) are taken as representative of concepts that explain the forces that underpin motivations and behaviours in Aboriginal organisations. Because the notion of culture is so broad, this limit is considered necessary to define behaviour within an organisational context.

### 2.8.3 Formal organisation or formal institution

There is a difference between a formal institution and a formal organisation. A formal organisation has a constitution or something equivalent; that is, a statement of what it is, why it exists, and how it will go about its business. It has a set of rules, usually but not always codified and written down, specifying ends and means. The modern organisation, however, is a destabiliser. It must be organised for innovation, and innovation is 'creative destruction' (Bailey 1988; Cooper & Argyris 1998; Morgan

1997). It must be organised for the systematic abandonment of whatever is established, customary, familiar, and comfortable, whether that is a product, service or process; a set of skills; human and social relationships; or the organisation itself. In short, it must be organised for constant change (Drucker 1998).

Institutions are not formally organised in these ways. People are served by formal organisations, but they serve institutions (March & Olsen 1984). The constant and repetitive quality of institutional life stems from the fact that practices come to be taken for granted. The model of behaviour is one in which "actors associate certain actions with certain situations by rules of appropriateness" (March & Olsen 1984, p. 741). Society, community and family are all conserving institutions in the context of this model, because decisions are based on guidance from the experience of others in comparable situations and by reference to standards of obligation. They try to maintain stability and to prevent, or at least to slow, change. Institutions are the subject of periodic agonising, but they are not open to the calm, scientific, detached consideration of their possible liquidation. In other words, they are protected by an element of the sacred. There is a taken-for-granted quality about institutions, an air of permanency, moral worth, and conservatism that is lacking in the strict definition of formal organisations. A formal organisation is brought into existence in order to achieve a given end: its purpose is extrinsic to itself. An institution, on the other hand, is an end in itself (Bailey 1988).

### 2.8.4 Religious hierarchy

A macro-level variable for all organisations is the underlying system that affords power and authority to the leaders. For this research, that variable is taken to be either a religious hierarchy or a political hierarchy because these are the two systems that

prescribe the governance of traditional Aboriginal society and Australia's industrialised society, respectively.

In traditional Aboriginal society, there was a distinct lack of any defined political authority (Berndt & Berndt 1965; Edwards 1975; Hiatt 1984). Life was largely a struggle. The physical environment challenged them to understand their world. They reacted by creating myths, which allowed them to define their physical world and explain some basic truths. These beliefs have generally been reflected as religious values (Campbell 1988).

There are several primary characteristics of mythology. Myths are dramatic, effective, and emotional (Campbell 1988). They are socially constructed, as opposed to individually held beliefs. They are social in the sense that they apply to group behaviour rather than the behaviour of an individual. However, individuals accept them uncritically. The ideas, definitions, and behaviour specified in myth contain the collective authority and acceptance of a group, what is often now called *conventional wisdom* (Curtis 1994).

One of the guiding factors in all Aborigines' deliberations was the emphasis on maintaining the *status quo*. It was the Elders who were entrusted with the administration of the tribal heritage for the benefit of all members of the group, without evidence of nepotism, fear of the ultimate growth of a dictatorship, or development of hierarchical families (King-Boyes 1977). Pressure was brought to bear on those who might transgress the parameters of the established lore, but this was normally done in the context of the family structure (Berndt & Berndt 1965, 1988).

The men of influence were typically individuals from 45 to 60 years of age, possessing strength, courage, energy, prudence, skill, and so on, and often belonging

to powerful families (Berndt & Berndt 1974). It was those male Elders who exercised authority in their local groups. There was usually one senior Elder who unofficially presided over all meetings, settled quarrels and made decisions relevant to the group's economic, social and ceremonial activities (Berndt & Berndt 1988).

### 2.8.5 Political hierarchy

The Australian constitution prescribes the governance of Australia's industrialised society. There is an official separation of the Church and State and every individual lives their life under the authority of political governance. The acceptance of religious authority is not mandatory: it is practiced on a voluntary basis.

Most organisations are governed by acts of parliament such as the Corporation's Law or the Tax Act. Aboriginal organisations are governed by the provisions of the ATSIC Act (1989) and the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act (1976). The first case study was an organisation that was located within the Queensland Department of Health. Its members were in effect Queensland public servants. The other three case studies were incorporated under the ATSIC Act (1989).

Within the Queensland public service and the ATSIC bureaucracy there is no provision for religious or cultural authority to govern any organisation. The exact opposite is the case, particularly for ATSIC. The governance of the case study organisations was vested in a democratically elected board of directors. This system is diametrically opposed to the religious governance in traditional Aboriginal society. The first case study was in effect governed by the political representatives of the people of Queensland.

### 2.8.6 Political science and political magic

For the purpose of this research, politics is presented in both a positive and negative light. Political science is taken to be those actions that produce positive outcomes for the organisation and the people concerned, while political magic is taken to be the dark side of organisational process. This classification is arbitrary; it is used to clarify the argument that organisational politics can be both good and bad (Hartel & Berry 1999).

Political magic, or the paradigms that label politics as bad (e.g. Kanter 1977; Kotter 1985; Pfeffer 1992) represent the nonrational, underside of organisational life, deflecting people away from task performance, emphasising instead devious, Machiavellian manoeuvrings for personal career or group advantage. Politics is the organisation's last dirty secret (Cooper & Argyris 1998). It is self serving behaviour and works against the interests of organisational efficiency and task achievement.

Political science, or the paradigms that label politics as good (e.g. Clegg & Hardy 1999; Foucault 1994; Morgan 1997; Pfeffer 1992; Pfeffer & Salancik 1978), have converged. Politics may well be functional for individual and organisational effectiveness, holding organisations together, aligning them with their environments, and distinguishing successful from unsuccessful managers. One dimension of politics emphasises the cognitive limits to rationality in decision making, given managers' limited information, noting that many decisions ultimately involve matters of judgement and are made and implemented by sifting coalitions, depending on the importance to different groups (Cooper & Argyris 1998).

Kotter (1985) argues that the manager must negotiate with more and more individuals and groups who fall outside the chain of command, as organisations become less

hierarchical and more horizontal, and as more decisions are made in cross-functional teams.

### 2.8.7 Organisational context as mediating variables

Consistent with the arguments presented so far, this research has qualified the context in which the case studies might exist. Morgan (1997) argues that organisational context is important, as it provides a basis from which to decode power plays and political dynamics. The traditional bureaucratic theme (Weber 1978), while still important in some applications, has in many other cases been overtaken by the newly found diversity and fluidity in organisations. At the same time those organisations are marked by decreasing certainty and structure (Clegg & Hardy 1999).

Nord and Fox (1996) note that within the Organisational Behaviour literature there has been a lack of attention to organisational context. They have suggested that reasons for this inattention are (1) the conservative role of the dominant paradigm, (2) the consistency theory in science that pressures new theories to be consistent with accepted knowledge, and (3) a dominant focus on the individual as the unit of analysis in combination with the current cognitive bias. The study of the individual is important (e.g. Hofstede 1984), but context is also important because it allows our attention to be drawn to the wider environmental factors that influence organisational process.

The discussions on power (see Section 2.3) indicate that it exists at either the theoretical or empirical levels. At the theoretical level, it is proposed that no universal definition is possible (Clegg & Hardy 1999; Hardy 1995; Morgan 1997), which precludes anticipating the organisational dynamics of the case studies. In the empirical arena, any definition of power is context specific and not transferable

(Barnes 1988; Clegg & Hardy 1999; Hardy 1995; Morgan 1997: Pfeffer 1981). Hardy (1995), in particular, puts the onus on the researcher to define the contextual setting of power in their research.

The organisational contexts for this research were conceived after consideration of the nature of Aboriginal affairs as reported in the media (e.g. Devine 1996; Koch 1999, 1996; O'Brien 1999; Smith 1999a, 1999b), as well as anthropological descriptions of traditional Aboriginal society (see Chapter 3). It would appear that future research that uses different case study material must be framed in the context of those organisations' circumstances.

**Table 2-9: Organisational context (mediating variables)**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. | The disposition to follow |
| 2. | Values, beliefs and customs |
| 3. | Formal organisations |
| 4. | Formal institutions |
| 5. | Religious hierarchy |
| 6. | Political hierarchy |
| 7. | Political science |
| 8. | Political magic |

## 2.9 Organisational outcome

Mintzberg and Quinn (1991) propose that the leader needs to work through a maze of options at their disposal to produce the best outcome for the organisation. Morgan (1997) highlights that the ability to influence the outcome of the decision making process is a well recognised source of power. The ground rules that guide the organisational process can be stacked in favour of a desired outcome.

Robey and Sales (1994) view organisational outcome in the context of a four-part model that governs organisational effectiveness:

1. The output goal approach, which emphasises such end results as profit, quality, and productivity.

2. The internal process approach, which emphasises the maintenance of effective human relationships within the organisation.

3. The system resource approach, which recognises the organisation's ability to draw needed resources from its environment.

4. The stakeholder approach, which recognises the preferences of various interest groups, both inside and outside the organisation.

The first three approaches reflect what is important to the organisation and can be controlled or manipulated by the manager. The fourth approach broadens the paradigm to include those interests external to the organisation. Presumably, these interests might be detected through the manager's liaison or negotiation roles.

What is clear is that while the actions of those who are subordinate to the power of managers can be controlled or mediated, it remains open as to what controls or mediates the actions of those who wield that power. These questions are beyond the scope of this research. Rather, this research focuses on how managers control their followers, not what managers do to the world with the power that their followers give them.

For this research, the decision as to the value of an organisation's outcome brought about by its managers' use of power is based on its own formal mission statement. The mission statement provides a focus from which we can judge the organisation's effectiveness in terms of its *raison d'etre* and *modus operandi*.

Positive outcomes are achieved when the actions of the manager produce a result that is closely aligned to the organisation's stated mission. Negative outcomes are achieved when the action of the manager produces a result that is inconsistent with the organisation's stated mission, but is probably aligned to the manager's self-interest. In the ancient world of traditional Aboriginal society, outcomes were guided by the power and authority of religion. No actions were ethically neutral; all power was vested in maintaining the *status quo* as defined by the religion (e.g. Berndt & Berndt 1978, 1974).

Modern Australian society does not have religious control over organisational outcomes. The Australian Constitution specifically separates the Church and the State, and it is the State that controls organisations through various legislations.

In traditional society this was never the case: the outcomes were known in advance because they were enshrined in the religious order that controlled their world. In today's society, the political hierarchy attempts to install preventative measures against the pursuit of self-interest, but there are numerous examples where entrepreneurs have discovered loopholes to their advantage. Because they are no longer answerable to God, managers can pursue self-interest with impunity if they are conversant with the rules of the game.

**Table 2-10: Organisational outcomes (dependent variable)**

| |
|---|
| 1. Positive outcome |
| 2. Negative outcome |

## 2.10 The theoretical model

Figure 2-1 presents the general conceptual framework that guides the current research and the approach to answering the research questions. This model was derived from the literature and no attempt is being made to test it. Its purpose is to simply guide the process of enquiry.

The basic tenet of Organisational Behaviour is to predict behaviour and use it purposefully to make organisations more effective (e.g. Robbins et al. 2001). However, as a number of authors (Frooman 1999; Hardy 1995; Mitchell et al. 1997; Morgan 1997; Shah 1998) point out, the nature of power makes the prediction of outcomes problematic. There is little agreement over what power really is (see Hardy 1995). Also, as the current research deals with beliefs and customs, certainty of outcomes are difficult to measure. Power can be described in general terms, but its use and its consequences, as argued above, cannot be fully explained.

The theoretical model developed in this thesis (Figure 2-1) is constructed on the basis that power is the independent variable (Astley & Sachdeva 1984; Clegg & Hardy 1999; Crozier 1973) that exists as a capacity (Foucault 1994; Hardy 1995; Morgan 1997; Pfeffer 1981). That capacity must be actualised through a human agent (Carlopio et al. 1997; Foucault 1994; Orlikowski 1992; Zastrow & Ashman 2001). In this research, that agent is the manager whose management functions (Mintzberg 1973) are taken to be universal (Lubatkin et al. 1997), and are hypothesised to be a mediating variable. It is the style of execution of the management function of leadership (Bailey 1988; Hollander 1992; Stewart 2001; Wiesner & Millett 2000) that sets one manager apart from another and generates another mediating variable. In addition, power can only be viewed in context specific circumstances (Barnes 1988;

Clegg & Hardy 1999; Hardy 1995; Morgan 1997; Nord & Fox 1996). The result produced by this complex organisational process is the organisational outcome, which is viewed positively or negatively in respect of the organisation's formal mission statement.

The conceptual model developed in this thesis is structured on the basis that the literature states that power is an independent variable. The research is based on what Aboriginal managers do, so Mintzberg's ten-function model is used as a mediating variable. The style of execution of the leadership component of management sets one manager apart from another, so this has been viewed as another mediating variable. Leadership styles are viewed as a variable separate to management functions, and not complimentary to them, because all of the leadership styles can be used by any of the management functions. Management functions and leadership style are viewed sequentially for the purpose of analysis, even though they may exist simultaneously in the organisational process. The organisational context is important because it allows a basis from which to view the application of power. The outcomes are dependent on all organisational processes.

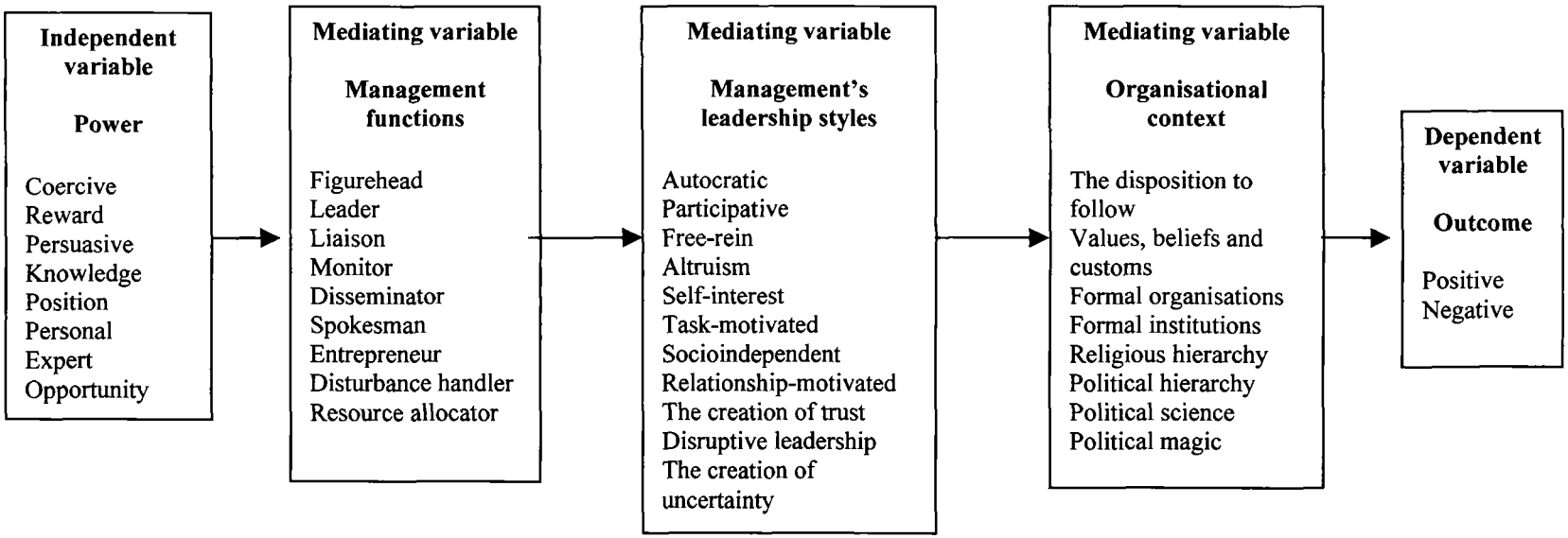



**Figure 2-1: Theoretical model**

# 3 A Benchmark: Traditional Aboriginal society

## 3.1 Traditional Aboriginal Society

In present times, Aboriginal leaders and managers often cite the lores of traditional society as the central reasons for how they manage Aboriginal organisations (Beckett 1988; Hiley 1997; Keen 1991;). For this reason, anthropological descriptions of traditional society are used to establish a benchmark to analyse the behavioural patterns in the four case studies explored here. This review is by no means exhaustive or an account of all that has transpired in traditional Aboriginal society.

In traditional Aboriginal societies and the contexts in which they existed, there was a high level of physical and cultural diversity (Berndt & Berndt 1965, 1974). However, contemporary leaders of Aboriginal society do not discriminate on the basis of tribal boundaries in terms of their management technique. Rather, they adopt a generalised view of Aboriginal Australia (ATSIC 1995, 1996, 1997).

### 3.1.1 Social Relations of Law and Order

In traditional Aboriginal society, there was a distinct lack of any defined political authority (Berndt & Berndt 1965; Edwards 1975; Hiatt 1984). This does not suggest that life was "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short" (Hobbes 1997, p. 464), or that there was an absence of routine or well-organised behaviours. Men of influence did exist. They were typically individuals from 45 to 60 years of age, possessing strength, courage, energy, prudence and skill. These men often belonged to powerful families, and those male Elders exercised authority in their local groups. There was usually one senior Elder who unofficially presided over all meetings, settled quarrels and made decisions relevant to the group's economic, social and ceremonial activities. Although

the senior Elder played the lead role, other Elders also contributed to the decision-making process. A person attained the status of Elder on the basis of their extensive knowledge of tribal law and customs and associated experience. This was not negotiable. It was impossible for an inexperienced young man to attain this status, regardless of his intellect or political skills (Berndt & Berndt 1988).

While the concept of a 'council' made up of old men was a generally accepted model, this notion was not acceptable to some Aboriginal groups. For some, there were heads of nuclear or extended families that acknowledged no higher political authority. Nor did they exercise any general authority beyond the limits of their own family groups (Berndt & Berndt 1965). There was a further position suggesting that the 'council' of Elders did not act in a judicial capacity on all matters. Some grievances were handled by related but interposed adults of various ages who had a range of responsibilities (Berndt & Berndt 1965).

A guiding factor in most deliberations was the emphasis on maintaining the *status quo*. It was the Elders who were entrusted with the administration of the tribal heritage for the benefit of all members of the group, without evidence of nepotism, fear of the ultimate growth of a dictatorship, or development of hierarchical families (King-Boyes 1977). Pressure was brought to bear on those who might transgress the parameters of the established lore, but this was normally done in the context of the family structure (Berndt & Berndt 1965, 1988). It was rarely the case that a dispute was exclusively between two individuals. Once the debate had begun, various family members would become involved to varying degrees according to their position and status (Berndt & Berndt 1965). At times the action taken was quite severe and brutal (King-Bayles 1977). Overall, there was a public concern with keeping order, even

though the machinery through which order was maintained was informal. There were both positive and negative sanctions (Berndt & Berndt 1988), but imposing sanctions was at times problematic because of the weakness or absence of a political structure (Berndt & Berndt 1965).

### 3.1.2 The Mantle of Authority

Traditional Aboriginal society's worldview of human beings and nature was predominantly religious (Berndt & Berndt 1974). The past was maintained through ritual and myth. While some men gained a formidable reputation as being good hunters, song men, dancers, painters, canoe builders, spear makers, 'doctors', and fighters, it was those who were leaders in the religious sense who were the most outstanding; those men were normally the Elders (Berndt & Berndt 1988). Their authority derived from involvement in sacred affairs. They had control over others, but only over a certain range of others. There were minor exceptions to that authority where some men gained prominence through entrepreneurial activities and 'spear rattling'. Quite apart from those exceptions, most tribes respected their Elders on the basis of their religious qualifications (Berndt & Berndt 1965, 1988).

Fathers had absolute power within families and when tribes assembled the Elders met and made decisions. Respect and deference increased when a man possessed the attributes of strength, courage, energy, prudence and skill, and also by strong family connections. However, although such men may have addressed the tribe, the various family groups were left to form their own judgements and to act as they thought proper. The emphasis was on authority within the family, with only a vague influence beyond it, with this being dependent on personal attributes and age (Edwards 1975). The government of Aboriginal tribes was not a democracy. At various times, power

was vested in the hands of sorcerers, warriors, dreamers and the old men or councillors. Authority was associated with both age and exceptional qualifications such as intelligence, cunning and bravery. There was little evidence of any hereditary authority (Edwards 1975).

The mantle of authority was well and truly vested in the Elders, who acted with assurance, confident of support from their religion and the sanctions it had to offer. On a formal and official basis, the leaders responded more in terms of an awareness of the wider social implications of peoples' actions. Through their direct religious associations, they had a vested interest in the maintenance of peace. To achieve this, they made use of the sanctions to which they alone had access, and which appear to have been quite effective (Berndt & Berndt 1965, 1974). Their power was often expressed as perceived rather than real power. The sentence of death, however, was used when it was considered necessary by Elders. The Elders, sanctioned by the group, decided who was guilty and what the punishment should be, and their decision was final (Strehlow n.d.).

In spite of the kinship regime that influenced individuals' behaviour, transgressions did occur and crimes were committed. The principal of reciprocity was a significant feature of traditional life. Because kinship positioning was largely ascribed, persons within the system were committed to varying courses of action in relation to different kin. Failure to carry through expectations in that context could lead to dissension; but self-interest was usually a controlling factor. Yet 'wrong' events did take place. When breaches of law occurred, sanctions could be imposed by an authority that had its power in non-kin origins (Berndt & Berndt 1965, 1988; Shapiro 1979).

Because social relationships were reciprocal and not one-sided, and because of the intermeshing of obligations, there were pressures against leaving grievances, especially major grievances, outstanding for an indefinite period – unless the persons concerned were out of touch with one another. The settlement was not restricted in terms of satisfaction for the individuals involved. Rather, a wider group of stakeholders had an interest in maintaining peace in the long term and so might become involved in the process of conflict resolution (Berndt & Berndt 1965).

### 3.1.3 Collective Action

In turbulent times, sides were often taken in response to kin obligations. However, in general, the working of the law most times did not occur in haste. For example, following the unjustified death of an individual, procedures in many cases were delayed for some time to allow emotions to subside (Berndt & Berndt 1965, 1988). A 'murderer' was identified, and steps taken to right the wrong for which he or she was held responsible. In nearly all cases, there was some form of collective participation in determining the action to be taken, and opportunities existed for social approval or disapproval by different sections of the community (Berndt & Berndt 1965).

In terms of power and authority, traditional Aboriginal society tended toward heterogeneity. Centralised authority was virtually non-existent. There was more concern for the internal administration of small social units (Berndt & Berndt 1965, 1988). Traditional Aborigines did not think of all human beings as equals, or even potential equals (Anderson 1988; Berndt & Berndt 1965; Butlin 1993). Religious revelations were hierarchically graded: ritual position counted for a great deal (Berndt & Berndt 1988). A man's progression within the religious sphere depended on initiative and drive. Ascribed status was important, but this could be augmented by

personal achievements. People had to act to gain authority, and some were more capable of doing that, or more interested, than were others. While the religious sphere offered more opportunities for advancement, it was only along prescribed lines. Authority was limited in social range and scale and also in the kind of action that it involved. Fights of conquest, attempts to impose government of one group or tribe upon another were virtually unknown (Berndt & Berndt 1965).

What was evident were various forms of administration to maintain the peace, settle or resolve disputes, or respond to infringements against the social order. The role of kin was significant in all social affairs (Edwards 1975). Any accusation against or by one person inevitably involved others. Kinship, with its associated prohibitions, obligations, and responsibilities, provided a strong system of control. Tradition also played a significant role in the administration of the events of the day. The use of precepts from the past as a precedent to determine courses of action was an aspect of control. In other words, certain offences or grievances called for certain time-honoured approaches (Berndt & Berndt 1965).

### 3.1.4 Conclusions: Traditional Aboriginal society

Traditional Aboriginal society existed mostly in a state of general equilibrium, and it required a considerable effort to maintain that state. In summary, the more salient details of traditional Aboriginal society include:

- Dominant religious hierarchy
- No political hierarchy
- Undemocratic society
- Dominant formal institutions
- No formal organisations

- Ruled totally by the authority of traditional culture and religion
- No formal parliament or legislation
- No financial structure
- No regional, national, or international structures

## 3.2 Marines on the beach: The new order

Marines on the beach in 1788 initiated the disintegration of Australia's traditional Aboriginal cultures (Beckett 1988; Cowlishaw 1988; Maddock 1988). That process continued throughout the land to eventually affect all tribes and their culture to varying degrees. Descriptions of contemporary Aborigines (Bowden & Bunbury 1990; Gilbert 1988; Hiley 1997; Rowley 1986; Sutton 1998) indicate a continuum ranging from something closely resembling pre-contact traditional Aboriginal culture through a plethora of variants toward assimilation into Australia's industrialised society. There is no current description of culture that is applicable to all Aborigines, indicating a heterogenous population.

### 3.2.1 The evolutionary process

Societies throughout history have tended to be traditional and conservative with an orientation toward the past, turning first to the tried and tested methods in attempting to solve problems. This tendency toward conservation of prevailing social structures is basic to human nature (Foulks 1991). This characteristic of human societies suggests that it was unlikely that traditional Aboriginal culture would have evolved into something different from what it was in the pre-contact period because there was a preoccupation with maintaining the *status quo*, usually through the leadership of the Elders.

The equilibrium of traditional Aboriginal culture was disintegrated by the impact of the dominant British culture. The extent to which that occurred varied greatly over space and time. There is clear evidence that, while many Aborigines rejected the new culture, others learned to live with it and in some cases profited under the new scheme (Pearson 1999).

The pre-contact traditional culture is well documented, but there is no evidence of any Aborigine living under the lores of traditional culture in today's mass urban society. Indeed, the empirical evidence shows that in the critical areas of governance and control, traditional Aboriginal society is diametrically opposed to the management practices prevailing in today's Aboriginal organisations.

### 3.3 Aboriginal identity and modern society

Every few hundred years throughout Western history, a sharp transformation has occurred. In a matter of decades, society altogether rearranges itself – its worldview, its basic values, its social and political structures, its arts and its key institutions (Drucker 1988). Fifty years later a new world exists and the people born into that world cannot even imagine the world in which their grandparents lived and into which their own parents were born. Our age is such a period of transformation. Only this time the transformation is not confined to Western society and Western history. Indeed, one of the fundamental changes is that there is no longer a 'Western' history or a 'Western' civilisation. There is only world history and world civilisation (Drucker 1998, p. 115).

There is nothing apparent in the literature to indicate what Aboriginal culture is in today's mass urban society. Certainly, there are numerous comments on Aborigines

and their circumstances, but they are descriptions of individuals, not a description of what their culture is.

Hutchings (1999) indicates an emerging field of research in anthropology, examining the Aboriginal culture that might exist today. Her research seeks to explain how Aborigines must constantly re-make and re-align their identities to affirm a sense of political, social and cultural power and independence from the nation-state while, at the same time, being intrinsically dependent upon State constructions of them as a people. The theme of her research indicates that some Aborigines are restructuring themselves and their society according to the lores about Aborigines held by the dominant industrialised society, while at the same time abandoning practices of the past. In other words, the urban Aborigines of today are changing according to the agenda set by the more dominant culture.

As the foregoing discussion shows, it is difficult to present a concise summary of who and what Aborigines are in today's society because of the diversity of their circumstances. At best, the following conclusions might be drawn.

- Unknown or fragmented religious values
- Minimal participation in mainstream politics
- Unknown democratic ideals
- Little or no formal institutions
- Emerging involvement with formal organisations
- Eclectic recognition of traditional culture
- Medium to strong acceptance of Parliamentary legislation
- Fragmented involvement with financial structures
- Fragmented involvement with regional, national, and international structures

## 3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the management of traditional Aboriginal society and some discussion that highlights the heterogenous nature of contemporary Aboriginal society. The presentation of these paradigms, together with the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, facilitates a temporal and cultural analysis of today's Aboriginal organisations.

The review of literature on power in Chapter Two indicates that there is little agreement on where it comes from, what it is, and how it is used. For that reason, it would be inappropriate to advance a precise theoretical model for this research. Indeed, the subjective model that was eventually conceived, allows for the many disparate views on the matters. Acknowledging of an important boundary condition of this research must be noted. At this stage, it is possible for other investigators to construct different models from the same literature. This is one of the caveats readers must take into account when interpreting inductive research, which is the dominant orientation here (see Chapter Four).

The review of traditional Aboriginal society indicates diametrically opposed values in every respect to the industrial paradigm. The juxtaposition of those phenomena has been the subject of much inquiry and debate in Aboriginal affairs in Australia. Yet, there is little in the literature to indicate how those two paradigms can be reconciled in the management of organisations. The current research will investigate this question in the context of the use of power by Aboriginal managers to affect organisational outcomes.

# 4 Methodology

## 4.1 Introduction

Chapter Four describes the methodology used for constructing the case studies of four Aboriginal organisations. Central to these cases are my participant observations of how various individuals used their power to affect organisational outcomes. In all four Cases people's identities are suppressed through the use of fictitious initials.

Given that the aim of this research is to expand the theoretical knowledge and understanding of the use of power, this exercise constitutes basic research rather than applied research (Saunders et al. 2000; Sekaran 1992; Zikmund 2000). The research uses a broad model of power to examine the use of power and the nature of power relations.

## 4.2 Choice of research methods

This research consists of qualitative observation that will identify the presence or absence of variables from the theoretical model, in contrast to quantitative observation, which involves measuring the degree to which one of those variables is present (Alvesson & Deetz 2000; Kirk & Allan 1986; Ticehurst & Veal 1999). The decision to use qualitative methods is based on the failure of the pilot studies to get the level of cooperation needed for quantitative data to be collected through questionnaires and surveys. The qualitative data that was collected is then presented as a case study for each organisation.

### 4.2.1 Case studies

Case studies are used for this research because they stress the holistic examination of a phenomenon and seek to avoid the separation of components from the larger context to which these matters may be related (Jorgensen 1989; Page & Meyer 2000). Case studies are flexible tools that can provide description, test theory, or generate theory, although theory generation is considered to be more important (Eisenhardt 1989). While case studies are valuable tools, further consideration must be given to the purpose of doing the research. Essentially, the *raison d'etre* has a major influence on the *modus operandi* (Patton 1990).

Ragin and Becker (1992) argue that case studies are not well defined in social science, although they do concede that "virtually every social scientific study is a case study or can be conceived as a case study, often from a variety of viewpoints" (1992 pp. 1-2). Case studies are the preferred option for this research as they provide superior information when 'how' and 'why' questions are asked over which the researcher has little or no control and when the research is conducted in the context of a real-life situation. Case studies have potential shortcomings. In particular, attention must be paid to the issue of generalisability, validity and reliability (Eisenhardt 1989; Parkhe 1993; Ticehurst & Veal 1999; Yin 1994).

In the current research, pilot case studies were conducted on the North Queensland Land Council in Cairns and the Gurang Land Council in Bundaberg. The pilot used survey methodology where questionnaires were distributed to all members of the organisations. There was little response, even though I was advantaged by having relatives among the staff of these organisations. I came to the conclusion that, for whatever reason, the research could not succeed by relying on staff to voluntarily

participate in the survey. Instead, it would be necessary for me to enter the organisations and record the data myself as a participant observer.

### 4.3 Participant observation

The advantage of observation studies over surveys, which obtain self-reported data from respondents, is that observational data do not have distortions, inaccuracies, or other individual response biases arising from memory error or social desirability. The data is recorded when the actual behaviour takes place (Zikmund 2000). Another advantage of participant observation is that it encourages the researcher to begin with the immediate experience of human life in concrete situations and settings. This method requires the researcher to become directly involved as a participant in peoples' daily lives. Through participation, the researcher is able to observe and experience the meanings and interactions of people that can only be gained by an insider (Jorgensen 1989; Yin 1994; Zikmund 2000).

On the other hand, *selective perception* and the *role of* the observer are two basic problems that have been identified with this method (Alvesson & Deetz 2000; Friedrichs & Ludtke 1975). Selectivity might affect not only the beginning of a series of observations, but also the process of observations. Generalising emotions or effects that are subjective is a questionable method, and faults made in recording or reproducing results gained by an observer cannot usually be corrected. Systematic training of the observer can reduce selectivity, but the problem of the observer's role is based on the integrative characteristics of social systems. Over a period of time, interdependence arises between the observer and the observed. It is also possible that reciprocal influences appear during the period of observation. In this case, the

observer should find out what *usually* happens in a group and not what happens because of their presence and stops happening when they leave the group (Yin 1994).

In my judgement, I feel that I was not affected in my observations to a degree that compromised the objectivity of my research. I declined invitations to indulge in after-work social drinks, purposefully avoiding any interactions with the organisations' members outside of the work environment. The maximum time that I spent gathering primary data in each organisation was four weeks. This brief time span did not allow any personal relationships to develop.

## 4.4 Positivist versus interpretive paradigms

Historically, positivist methods have dominated research in management (Alvesson & Deetz 2000). Parkhe (1993) found that most research asked what, who and where questions, with little weight given to theoretically grounded how and why explanations. Bonoma (1985) concurs with Parkhe. He proposes that management theory involves formulating a tentative theory of a well known phenomenon, deducing implied empirical consequences, and controlling situational events in order to observe the validity of empirical deductions.

More recently, however, there has been a trend towards the adoption of more inductive research methods in situations with a relatively underdeveloped theoretical base or where complex observational tasks are involved (Alvesson & Deetz 2000). Parkhe (1993) observes that not all areas of research are in a preparadigmatic stage. Greater progress has been made in developing theories of outcomes than of processes. Bonoma (1985) also believes that because of their complexity or breadth, certain phenomenon can not be operationalised meaningfully in quantitative terms. Instead,

clinical judgement based on qualitative data is required, making use of scientific knowledge without being bound by quantitative methods of analysis.

When investigating socially constructed and subjective meanings, the interpretive research methods have a distinct advantage, as deductive methodological foci inhibit systematic study of crucial aspects of organisations, resulting in serious theoretical gaps (Ticehurst and Veal 2000; Parkhe 1993). The interpretive researcher tries to see the world from their subject's point of view. Blalock (1984) concurs, stating that in the social sciences our causal laws are both multivariate and indeterministic, with some measurement decisions becoming much more problematic and seemingly arbitrary.

Babbie (1998) argues that the inductive approach to understanding patterns, themes or common categories has distinct advantages over the deductive approach in that the openness of the grounded theory approach allows greater latitude for discovering the unexpected. This supports his view that many important social scientific experiments occur outside controlled settings, often in the course of normal social events (Babbie 1998). Morgan and Smircich (1980) lend some temperance to the debate by arguing that the dichotomy between quantitative and qualitative methods is a rough and oversimplified one. They further argue that qualitative research is an approach rather than a particular set of techniques, and its relevance is based on its contextual setting. Drawing the great battle line between quantitative and qualitative methods might be counter productive, as it has the effect of highlighting trivial details of research (Alvesson & Deetz 2000).

Because many areas of the social sciences have not been well served by existing deductive, theory testing methods, some authors (e.g. Bonoma 1985; Eisenhardt 1989;

Yin 1994) feel that interpretive research approaches could provide realistic analysis of the phenomena under study. The new paradigm that has evolved in reaction to the application of positivism to the social sciences stems from the view that the world and 'reality' are not objective and exterior, but that they are socially constructed and given meaning by people (Easterby-Smith et al. 1991).

There are some important differences between interpretive and positivist research paradigms, which underpin the selection of the interpretive approach for this thesis:

- This thesis uses words rather than numbers as the primary interpretive process;
- It is more inductive than deductive, being concerned with theory building rather than hypothesis testing; that is, it aims at internal validity through information richness rather than external validity from statistical measures of generalisability;
- It uses data from organisations rather than from experiments in the laboratory;
- It includes subjective information collected from observations and interviews, rather than concentrating on objective, value-free data;
- It pays more attention to particulars while also being more broadly focussed;
- The researcher is a participant observer as much as is possible (Perry & Coote 1994).

The validity of the interpretive paradigm is reinforced by Easterby-Smith et al. who argue, "reality is socially constructed rather than objectively determined" (1991, p. 24). They further argue that one "should try to understand and explain why people have different experiences, rather than search for external causes and fundamental

laws to explain their behaviour. Human action arises from the sense that people make of different situations, rather than as a direct response from external stimuli" (1991, p. 24). Tsoukas also prefers the interpretive paradigm, as it is "epistemologically valid because it is concerned with the clarification of structures and their associated generative mechanisms, which have been contingently capable of producing the observed phenomena" (1989, p. 556).

### 4.4.1 Induction and deduction in case study research

There is some debate over the relative merits of inductive and deductive research methods. This highlights the heterogenous nature of this phenomenon, with some arguments polarised in the extreme while others take a middle-of-the-road approach. Eisenhardt (1989), for example, feels that case studies qualify as hypothesis testing research, but they might also include some inductive elements. She urges caution in the initial stages, because most research tends to highlight previously unknown phenomena as it progresses.

Dyer and Wilkins (1991) argue that more value is to be gained from in-depth studies of fewer case studies than multiple surface-level case studies. Eisenhardt (1991) rebuts this view, arguing that methodological rigour and multiple-case comparative logic is essential if one is to gain a theoretical insight to the research topic.

Yin (1994) considers the more flexible inductive approach to be problematic, arguing that the scientific method of deductive reasoning is essential to improving case study research. Patton (1990), however, does not favour deductive analysis. His inductive focus seeks to balance indigenous concepts derived from the data and sensitising concepts from prior theory that might guide the researcher through uncharted waters. This approach is supported by Jensen and Jankowski (1991), who have found that

many researchers employ sensitising concepts in the preliminary stages of investigation to establish a starting point for their empirical investigations.

It is important to note that if the more inductive approach is contemplated, the data gathering and analysis must lend itself to cross-case analysis (Perry & Coote 1994). Yin (1994) argues that the more inductive method is to be avoided because, if any theory is to be generated, it will evolve from all cases in one operation of data analysis.

### 4.4.2 Combining induction and deduction

The literature suggests that an extreme perspective in either direction should be avoided. It would appear that the best option is to acknowledge the attributes of both paradigms and to proceed cautiously.

One of the benefits of induction is that the theory is generated from the data, which assures that the theory will fit the work (Glaser & Strauss 1967). Strauss (1987) also feels that if the thrust of research is to develop theory, then we must free ourselves of preconceived models of data, methodology and theory. Van Maanen (1983) adds further argument against deduction, highlighting the potential for the facts that emerge from our studies to be twisted to fit a given theory.

Zikmund (2000) is opposed to extreme deductive or inductive methods, arguing that theory construction requires both perspectives if it is to be of any value. Eisenhardt (1989) argues that there will always be an element of deduction; it is impossible to start with a theoretically clean slate and induction is preferred if we are to maintain an intimate connection with empirical reality. Manicas (1989) supports Eisenhardt on the

basis that the process of socialisation must play some role in predetermining our investigative paradigm.

While it is important to ensure that a case study is rich in detail and based on empirical evidence, it is just as important for the analysis to be structured in the context of "methodological rigour and multiple-case comparative logic" (Eisenhardt 1991 p. 626). Eisenhardt's moderate position is seen as being representative of a number of authors on case study methodology (Perry & Coote 1994).

## 4.5 The role of prior theory

The arguments presented so far support the notion of a balance between deduction and induction, but the exact ratio between the two has not been defined. Parkhe (1993) argues that no single approach is satisfactory. Once the core concepts are understood, it is only then that the researcher should incorporate the unique strengths of other approaches.

Miles and Huberman (1994) observe that researchers have a tendency to adopt a method on the basis of the study context. They also caution against inexperienced researchers adopting an inductive bias, arguing they require the clarity and focus of deduction. In some situations, trade-offs are involved. There must be loose initial frameworks if the intricate case details are to be captured as data, but this might prove to be time consuming and inhibit cross-case analysis. Inflexible design structures, on the other hand, are conducive to cross-case analysis but pose the danger of missing some of the details of the case study. If some of the data do not fit the research design, it might be twisted out of contextual shape or excluded from the study altogether. Miles and Huberman conclude that it seems better to avoid the extremes.

Yin (1994) advocates the use of prior theory. It provides a blueprint upon which to base the research and interpret the results. On the other hand, Mintzberg's (1991) tendency was to go into organisations with a well-defined focus. He had a preference for inductive research because it enabled him to discover new theories rather than simply confirming that which already exists.

Perry and Coote (1994) highlight the benefits of prior theory because it defines a path for the investigation so that the study will generate the greatest meaning. It also facilitates the classification of data and gives the researcher some idea of the data that might be unearthed. Perry and Coote suggest the methodology will be most successful if it has the appropriate blend of deduction and induction, but with its roots in the interpretive paradigm. Both deduction and induction are necessary for the other to be of value.

The current management literature does not provide a solid theoretical model of what power is and how it is used. On that basis, it seems logical to explore an inductive interpretation of the case studies. On the other hand, the voluminous existing literature cannot be ignored. This circumstance lends itself to Perry and Coote's (1994) argument that both approaches are necessary. Consequently, both deductive and inductive analysis of the data will be executed in an attempt to clarify the debate on power. The theoretical model has incorporated all of the popular views on power, but that model does not purport to be 'the' theoretical model on power in its own right. It is more accurate to identify that model as one which reflects organisational processes, of which power is only one of the five sets of variables.

## 4.6 Criterion for case selection and their number

The main criterion for case selection was the sanctioned requirement of diversity and number. The cases that have been selected are representative of issues relating to many Aboriginal problems (Royal Commission 1997). They provide maximum variation within that area (Perry & Coote 1994) and are sufficiently diverse to enhance or improve any generalisations from the findings (Gersick 1988). Each case has sufficient richness of information to allow in-depth studies, even given that two of the cases were constructed from secondary data. The data are able to be collected within a reasonable time. This selection also represents extreme or deviant case sampling (Patton 1990).

### 4.6.1 Purposive selection

Selection of cases should be done with the specific purpose of theoretical replication (Perry & Coote 1994). This selection is being used for the purpose of replication of organisational structures and people's behaviour with respect to the use of power. The selection of the four cases is intentional and not random. They were not chosen to replicate previous cases (there are none) or to fill Aboriginal management theoretical categories (none exists), but to represent a cross section of Aboriginal organisations.

All organisations have similarities and differences. As they all represent Aboriginal issues in some way, they provide the opportunity to assess the role that Aboriginal culture might play in management practices. On the other hand, they are extremely diverse in terms of the resources at their disposal. While the legal and media organisations tend to suffer from limited resources, the health and land rights organisations seem to have no such problem.

There are approximately 1,200 Aboriginal organisations in Australia that are registered under the ATSIC Act (1989) or The Aboriginal Councils and Associations (ACA) Act (1976). Case 1, the Aboriginal Health Service was an element of the Queensland Department of Health. The other three cases were registered as Aboriginal organisations under the ATSIC Act or the ACA Act.

Four case studies were targeted for data collection. This is the minimum number considered necessary for convincing theory generation (Eisenhardt 1989). The upper limit of 12 to 15 cases (Miles & Huberman 1994) is not explored because resource limitations prohibit data collection to the point of theoretical saturation (Eisenhardt 1989) or to the point of redundancy (Perry & Coote 1994). The four chosen cases are, however, extremely rich in information.

## 4.7 Ethical considerations

This research was guided by the requirements of the *Behavioural and Social Sciences Ethical Review Committee* (BSSERC) of The University of Queensland, which incorporates the *Joint NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice.* After obtaining permission from the organisations' gatekeepers, I was able to have access to the first three of my cases, the AHS, the legal service and the radio station. I was denied access to the fourth case, the land council.

For Case 1, some ethical considerations did arise which necessitated the deletion of the primary data. However, there was sufficient secondary data available in the public domain to facilitate the case study. For Cases 2 and 3, the method for gathering the data was to get a voluntary appointment in each organisation and operate as a participant observer. Even though I was unable to access the land council (Case 4), sufficient secondary data from public records was available to construct a case study.

The legal service (Case 2) offered no surprises. All of the staff were friendly and cooperative. Some of the activity relating to the external affairs of the organisation was obtained from secondary sources. The radio station (Case 3) proved to be the easiest of all cases. It was a straightforward matter of observing the events of the day as they unfolded.

## 4.8 Approach to analysing case data

This thesis begins with the research question of clarifying the source and use of power in organisations and in doing so has reviewed the most recent literature on power. It also investigates the role played by Aboriginal culture in the management of the case studies. Further literature was reviewed to establish the other variables of management function, leadership style and organisational context. On the basis of the more salient details of those literatures, a theoretical model was constructed to reflect those arguments and how they each affect organisational outcomes. The theoretical model was then reduced in detail, without compromising its validity, to construct the analytical tool, which in turn formed the coding tool.

The data that were extracted from the case studies using the coding tool is presented at the end of each case study. It was my qualitative interpretation that transformed the text into data. The validity of the interpretation is ensured through the use of a visible and open analytical tool (Mason 1998). However, the coding tool itself is not the dominant factor in this analysis. It was my own perceptions as a participant observer, or making a value judgement of the secondary data, that determined what data were extracted from the case studies and what data were left behind. For that reason, I consider the coding tool to be a guiding model to interpret the data. While the model was used to maintain consistency across the cases, it is not a testable model. Even

though a different observer might reach a different conclusion on some of the details, I do not expect that the substance of my argument would be challenged, given the data.

After the data were recorded, the number of times each variable occurred was then expressed as a percentage of the total number of samples for each case. This numerical representation provides an easily interpretable index of the frequency a given variable occurred relative to other variables of interest. The analysis of the data is contained in Chapter Five, which also shows the cross case analysis of the variables. Figure 4-2 presents an overview of the process adopted from the asking of the research question to reaching a conclusion based on the empirical evidence from the comparison and contrast of the case studies with the arguments gleaned from the literature review.

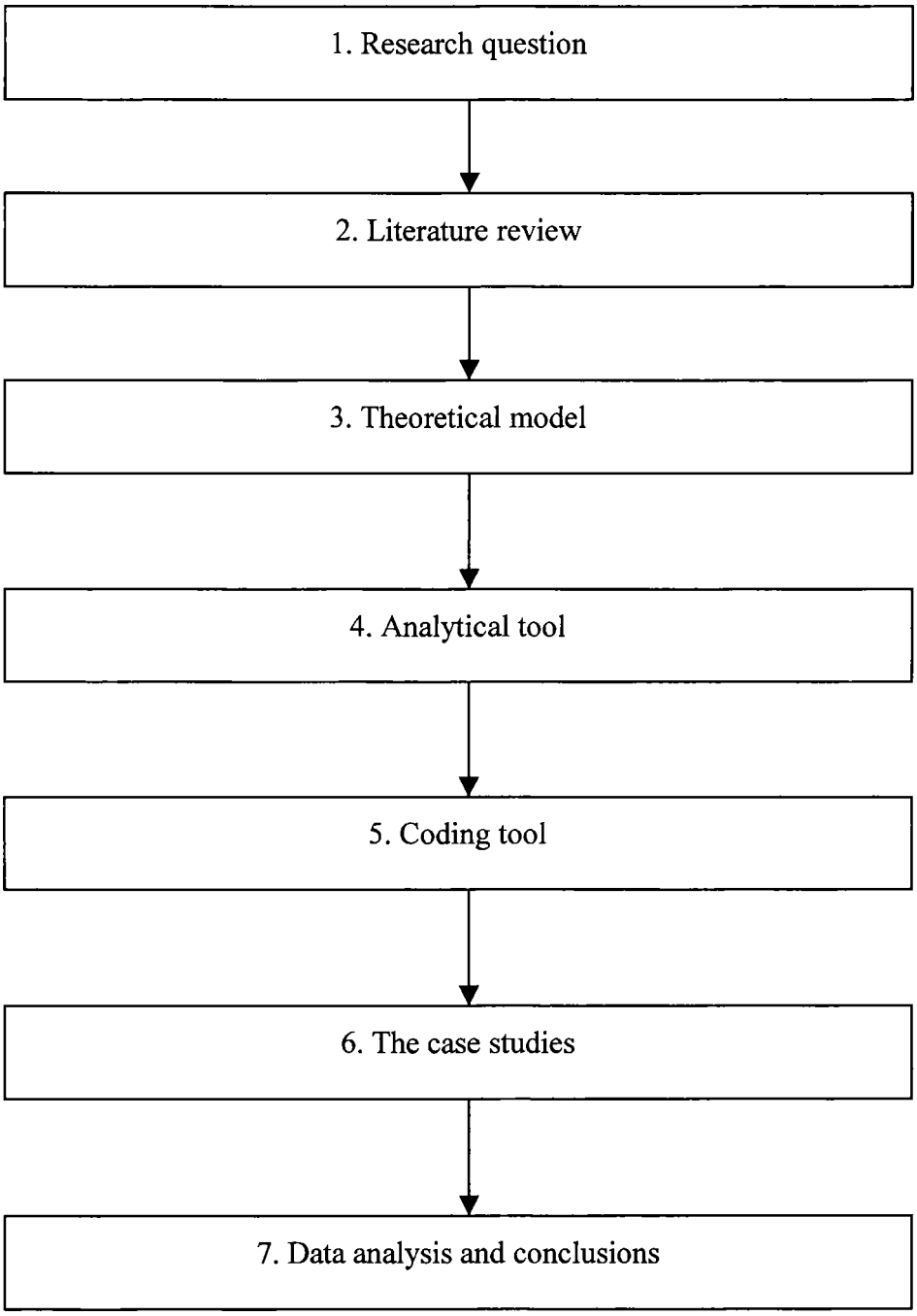
### 4.8.1 Unit of analysis

The focus of this research is the individual use of power, with other variables included as part of the analytical tool. The primary target for analysis was the managers of the organisations studied. On that basis, the unit of analysis was the individual (Hofstede 1984; Sekaran 1992; Zikmund 2000). There were some examples where persons other than the managers used power, but this is valid data because their actions came under the auspices of the manager and it had an effect on organisational outcomes.

| Power | Management functions | Manager's leadership style | Organisational context | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coercive | Figurehead | Autocratic | The disposition to follow | Positive |
| Reward | Leader | Participative | Values, beliefs and customs | Negative |
| Persuasive | Liaison | Free-rein | Formal organisations | |
| Knowledge | Monitor | Altruism | Formal institutions | |
| Position | Disseminator | Self-interest | Religious hierarchy | |
| Personal | Spokesman | Task-motivated | Political hierarchy | |
| Expert | Entrepreneur | Semi-independent | Political science | |
| Opportunity | Disturbance handler | Relationship-motivated | Political magic | |
| | Resource allocator | The creation of trust | | |
| | Negotiator | Disruptive leadership | | |
| | | The creation of uncertainty | | |

**Figure 4-1: Analytical tool**

**Figure 4-2: From research question to conclusions**



## 4.9 Conclusion

Even though basic research aims to expand the limits of knowledge, at no time did I attempt to go blindly into the field without any guidance from prior theory. Indeed, the fact that a number of research issues with respect to the thesis topic have been identified in the literature review indicates that some deduction is inevitable. For example, power has been described as an independent variable, which will be assessed using the case data. There are aspects of power, leadership style and context that must be recognised and targeted, but for which conflicting theories exist. For this reason, inductive reasoning is also essential in order to address the research question.

There are a number of factors that must be addressed when doing research with Aboriginal organisations. Among them are choosing the correct unit of analysis, identifying the method by which data will be collected, and being aware of the political landscape. The first issue, the unit of analysis, is a non-trivial matter. By all accounts, to adopt the approach taken by the media, the government, and other stakeholders, the unit of analysis might be at the 'community' level. This is a potential flaw in all research dealing with Aboriginal peoples as the notion of community, as I have argued (see Section 3.3), does not apply to contemporary urban Aboriginal societies. Hofstede (1984), Sekaran (1992) and Zikmund (2000) clearly advocate the individual as the unit of analysis for this type of research. Young (1990), in particular, questions if the term 'community' is valid under any circumstance in today's mass urban society.

The method for collecting data regarding the thesis topic is problematic if standard survey methods were to be used. On two previous occasions when questionnaires were used, the response rate was 2% and 0% respectively. The first occasion was data

collection for an unpublished thesis (Appo 1992) and the second occasion was two pilot studies for this thesis. The reasons for the non-response to the surveys in the past are open to speculation, but what can be excluded is any ill feeling toward the researcher. I had established good relationships with all of the participants. In fact, some of them are related to me. Individuals in the organisations approached me and even went to the extent of wishing me every success in my efforts. For some unknown reason, they then ignored my request to respond to the survey. No pressure to respond was placed on the participants. From what I could ascertain from consultation with my colleagues, a low response rate was to be expected, still, the extent of the non-response was unusually high.

The best way of overcoming this problem of collecting data was to take a voluntary position in the organisations that I had access to, with full disclosure of my research intentions, and do some work for them. This technique had the advantage of giving me access to all of the organisation's staff and enabled the observation of many events that would never be reported in a survey.

# 5 Field Research and Data Analysis

## 5.1 Introduction

Chapter Five contains the four case studies and explains how the analytical tool is used to code the data from those case studies. The data-coding tool (Table 5-1) is derived from the conceptual framework (Figure 2-1). As each case unfolds, an incident where the use of power is observed or detected is marked by a level three sub-heading (e.g. 5.2.1 Allan's empire) and recorded as data. For example, there might be an incident where a person used their position power to control a situation, while using the management function of leader, the leadership style of creating uncertainty, and the organisational context of political magic. Finally, the data might indicate either a negative or positive result for the organisation. The positive or negative result might be known immediately or might remain suppressed or unobserved for a considerable period.

**Table 5-1: Data-coding tool**

| | |
|---|---|
| Power | coercive, reward, persuasive, knowledge, position, personal, expert, opportunity |
| Management function | figurehead, leader, liaison, mentor, disseminator, spokesman, entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator, negotiator |
| Manager's leadership style | autocratic, participative, free-rein, altruism, self-interest, task motivated, semi-independent, relationship motivated, the creation of trust, disruptive leadership, the creation of uncertainty |
| Organisational context | disposition to follow, values beliefs customs, formal organisations, formal institutions, religious hierarchy, political hierarchy, political science, political magic |
| Outcome | positive, negative |

Each variable in Table 5-1 is explained in detail in the literature review (see Chapter Two). As the literature has shown, it is possible for either one variable or a combination of variables to be in play for any given situation where power was used. For example, the following combinations of variables could be used together:

coercive and position power; the management functions of monitor and disturbance handler; the management leadership style of autocratic and self-interest; and the organisational context of formal institutions and political hierarchy.

The analysis of the data had to reflect consistency across all cases. Simply recording the number of times a certain variable was observed in each case is problematic because of the variations in size of each case study. Also, the number of samples varied between cases of similar size. Consequently, the ratio scale method was adopted. I used the ratio level of measurement because in addition to the requirements of the interval level, a true, or absolute, zero point can be determined with each variable. That is, zero means that a variable did not exist in that Case Study. The term ratio refers to the fact that, within each Case Study, I measured the ratio between the numbers of times a *variable* was present against the *total number of samples* in the Case Study (Pedhazur & Pedhazur-Schmelkin 1991). For example, if 36 samples were taken in a study and the variable 'leader' was present in 12 samples, the ratio scale indicates that 'leader' has a value of 33.3%. On the other hand, if 18 samples were taken and 'leader' was present in 9 samples, that variable would have a value of 50%.

The ratio scale was used to indicate the value that a variable had between 0 and 100%. The data was then presented in Tables 5.3 to 5.17 using an interval scale, which consists of the following values:

0-19% = Very Low (VL)

20-39% = Low (L)

40-59% = Medium (M)

60-79% = High (H)

80-100% = Very High (VH)

For this research whenever the use of power was observed in a case study, that action was taken to be a sample. Each variable (i.e. power, management functions, management's leadership style, organisational context, and outcome) observed in that sample was underlined and then recorded. The total number of each type of *variable* is expressed as a ratio to the *total number of samples* in that case.

This is a qualitative analysis because the analytical tool identifies the presence of a variable, but it does not measure the degree to which that variable exists. All of the possible variables that could exist in each incident were considered, but it is only those variables that were perceived to be present when the use of power was observed that are recorded as data. For that reason it must be understood that the sampled variables represent the perception of a single participant observer that coded the data. Each incident of the use of power is shown in the case studies at the point where it was observed, while a list of all the data and its analysis are shown at the end of each case study.

## 5.2 Data recording

For recording the data, I adopted the practice of getting a job as a volunteer project officer with the first three organisations. For the fourth organisation (the Land Council), because access was denied, I had to construct the case from secondary information. Due to unforseen events, which raised new ethical considerations, the first case was also constructed from secondary information.

### 5.2.1 Limitations of case study research

Although the participant observer method for Cases 2 and 3 described a wide variety of behaviours, they were not idiographic studies. Also, I was only able to report what

I saw. In the absence of multiple researchers or the use of video equipment, for example, the complete description of what occurred in those organisations might not have been captured. However, the data that was generated from the case studies is sufficiently rich to draw conclusions regarding the research questions. For Cases 1 and 4 it is only those details that qualified as secondary data that have been reported. While that is a limitation in terms of case study detail, the reports do contain a rich collection of the use of power.

This research has not included all of the Aboriginal population in the target areas, nor has it explored all of the available organisations, due to limitations on time and resources. However, the data collected and the patterns that have emerged are sufficiently detailed as to allow a credible analysis.

### 5.2.2 Case study protocols

The protocols adopted for case varied according to the circumstances of each organisation. The legal service and the radio station were similar in the sense that the data was gathered using participant observation, while the AHS and the land council were constructed from secondary information. The organisations were viewed in the context of what category of power, management function and the leadership style that used by managers to control their followers, as well as the context in which that power was used. It is important to note that no attempt was made by the researcher to control the contextual environment. It was taken as a given and observations made accordingly.

## 5.3 Case Study 1 – Aboriginal Health Service

The Aboriginal Health Service (AHS) served as the first case study. The case data reported here were constructed from secondary data from *The Courier-Mail* newspaper (Koch 1996). The details from the newspaper article were limited in their scope so I obtained additional unreported material from Tony Koch, the journalist who reported this story. This consisted of an eleven page report of what transpired in the AHS prior to the story becoming public in the media. Further Information was obtained through phone conversations and interviews with the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Australian Federal Police, the Queensland Police Service, and the Australian Securities Commission.

The AHS was created to perform a liaison function between local indigenous groups, the Queensland State Government and the Federal Government. It was intended to be an information resource at the 'coal face' of indigenous health problems that could be accessed by Federal and State Health Ministers and their bureaucracies. Allan was appointed as Chairman of the AHS. It was an influential position, where Allan had command of considerable resources and enjoyed a good deal of autonomy. There was every indication from public and private sources that Allan was a highly respected member of the local Aboriginal society. He was regarded as being a leader for and on behalf of the Aboriginal people (notes from Tony Koch).

Although Allan occupied a position of power and trust, Koch (1996) reported in his newspaper articles that Allan's reputation was nothing but a facade to mask his covert activities. He was allegedly using the taxpayer-funded AHS as a 'front' for his private businesses.

### 5.3.1 Allan's empire

Koch (1996) informed that Allan repeatedly used his persuasive powers, his position as Chairman of the AHS, and his personal influence to negotiate business deals that had nothing to do with Aboriginal health. He was the leader and spokesman of the AHS team, liaising with outside interests and keeping some of his staff informed by disseminating that information to them. His *modus operandi* was at times entrepreneurial. Sometimes he created uncertainty by only allowing part or inaccurate information to filter through to his followers. His use of political magic kept the organisation clouded in mystique to mask his covert activities. At the end of the day this created a negative outcome for Aboriginal health.

### 5.3.2 Allan woos ATSIC

Allan's activities were exposed as a result of publicity created by a dispute over the refusal of ATSIC to transfer the title in certain real estate to Allan's private company. Allan had considerable persuasive influence an ATSIC Regional Councillor. He also used his position as Chairman of the AHS as well as personal connections within the ATSIC bureaucracy. He appointed himself as spokesman for the disputed land interests. He engaged in entrepreneurial activities to lobby for the support of other regional councillors to have the title transferred to his private company. Many of his colleagues supported Allan on the basis of long standing personal relationships, and they trusted him. Had Allan been successful with his political magic, he would have been the owner of a property that was paid for by the taxpayers. ATSIC was the legal owner of that title, a failed cultural tourism site called Waterloo. Allan formed a private company, of which he was Chairman of the Board. Allan gave an undertaking to his friends on the Regional Council that once his private company had secured the

title, the asset would never be sold. He assured ATSIC that it would always be there for the benefit of his people (Koch 1996). This entire episode of lobbying and entrepreneurial activity consumed considerable resources from the AHS, which was a negative outcome for Aboriginal health.

### 5.3.3 Allan's private company

Federal police and the State and Federal Governments were informed that Allan had used his position in AHS to gain access to Health Department funds to operate his private companies. As the leader, he had the use of the boardroom and office equipment, including the cost of phone calls, faxes and vehicles that were unknowingly paid for by Queensland Health and the taxpayers. He used his relationship with the Regional Director of Queensland Health (whose office was in the same building) to reassurer her that it was all legitimate health business. She trusted him. Allan would regularly inform her of his relationship with the Minister for Health (political hierarchy) and that the Minister was impressed with her performance in relation to Aboriginal health (political magic). This false impression had a negative impact on the AHS mission (notes from Tony Koch).

### 5.3.4 Allan defends his empire

The ATSIC board was asked by one of its commissioners, Tom Jones, to investigate Allan's involvement in the use of Waterloo, which was put into liquidation in 1990 with debts of $500,000. The dispute between ATSIC and Allan had been ongoing for some time. Allan attempted to use persuasion to convince the public that all allegations could be explained and that ATSIC was acting illegally (Koch 1996). As the team leader, Allan had a number of secretive meetings with Tom Jones. He used his relationship as his ex brother-in-law as leverage to gain his trust. On many

occasions Tom had worked with Allan in other Aboriginal organisations, and as a Regional Councillor (political hierarchy), he was in a position to offer favourable treatment (political magic) (notes from Tony Koch). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.3.5 Allan attacks ATSIC

Speaking on behalf of Waterloo, Allan said that ATSIC should be disbanded and that if any ATSIC person set foot on Waterloo, he would "drown the bastards in the lake" (coercion) (Koch 1996). Allan had never been elected to be Chairman of Waterloo, but simply assumed the position of leader as a matter of course. He acted with a good deal of self-confidence, based on the relationship that he enjoyed with the local Aboriginal community as well as the trust created by his political position in ATSIC (notes from Tony Koch). He made good use of the local media to promote his agenda and gain support for his campaign (political magic). Police protection had to be given to a consultant who was reporting to a meeting that was determining the continued use of the Waterloo centre (Koch 1996). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.3.6 Bleeding the system

Koch (1996 pp. 1 and 4) reported further details where Allan, who held the position of Chairman of the AHS and the Aboriginal Health Education Company (AHEC), misused his leadership authority to allocate AHS funds to fly two Aboriginal Elders from Alice Springs to this town to discuss a mining venture. Allan had been liaising with mining companies as part of his entrepreneurial activities. When staff questioned his action, he simply insisted that his instructions be obeyed (autocratic). The allocation of $1,580 for return airfares for the Elders was at the expense of Queensland Health, who had also unwittingly paid for their accommodation at a local motel (creation of trust). Allan said that mining activities are legitimate "health

business". "Jobs mean better lifestyles, and therefore better health, so it was a health issue" (political magic) (Koch 1996). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.3.7 Free overheads

One of Allan's private companies, Ajax Pty Ltd, was a $2 shelf company. It had no assets or premises, but was heavily involved with mining activities (entrepreneur). Allan used his position to piggybacked Ajax business onto AHS resources, including the use of staff. He used his leadership skills to avoid scrutiny from the Regional Director of Queensland Health, who was located in the same building. Allan had a good relationship with the Regional Director. The Director obviously trusted Allan, having visited him in his office and appeared to be in the dark regarding Allan's covert activities (political magic) (notes from Tony Koch). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.3.8 Allan's version of health

Allan used his position to employ a friend, Bob Tripp, as a "cultural officer" with the AHS; although as leader he directed that Tripp work exclusively on issues for his entrepreneurial ventures of Ajax and Waterloo. Allan had a close relationship with Tripp and said that Tripp was employed to ensure that land held in native title in northern towns was handed over to Aboriginal people (creation of trust). Allan said that he considered native title negotiations to be "health business", and therefore a legitimate activity for the AHS (political magic) (Koch 1996). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.3.9 Creating alliances

Allan used his position as leader to pay $10,000 in consultancy fees (resource allocator) from AHEC funds to another friend and business partner (relationship motivated) for work done on his private company, Waterloo (entrepreneur). The auditor noted the $10,000 discrepancy from AHEC funds. Allan said that if AHEC had paid $10,000 for a consultant, then "that is their business" (formal organisation – political magic). He then went on to state that he was Chairman (leader) of AHEC (Koch 1996). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.3.10 Buying votes with the health budget

Allan used his position as Chairman of AHEC to allocate funds to fly an Aboriginal woman and her partner to this town to assist Allan's bid (relationship motivated) to gain control (formal organisation) of a land council (entrepreneur). Their accommodation and meals at a local motel were paid using a Queensland Health purchase order. As far as Queensland Health was concerned, and indeed what they were told, was that this was a necessary activity to discuss health business (leadership). No reports were produced nor were there any visible outcomes as a result of the 'health meeting' (political magic) (Koch 1996). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.3.11 Let's party

Allan used his position as leader of the AHS to host a birthday party for himself in a local restaurant at a cost of $650 (resource allocator) that was billed to the AHS. Allan instructed one of his staff to inform the restaurant owner that this was an official health business meeting and to send the account to the AHS, as had been the normal

arrangement on a number of previous occasions. About 20 of Allan's friends were invited to attend the party, including two local members of the Queensland Parliament (relationship motivated). The MPs also invited their partners in the belief that it was an official function being hosted by Queensland Health (creation of trust – political hierarchy – political magic) (Koch 1996). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.3.12 Friends in high places

The ATSIC Regional Council called for proposals for the property, Waterloo. After Allan lobbied his friends on the Regional Council (personal), the bid put forward by Waterloo was favoured (persuasion). However, there was a limit to Allan's influence and the Regional Council refused to "gift" the land and said that Waterloo could have it if they paid $1.7 million. That decision was passed on to the ATSIC board of commissioners in Canberra (political hierarchy). Following representations made by Allan (liaison), two of the commissioners successfully led a push (relationship motivated) to overturn that local resolution and voted that the land be gifted to Waterloo (political magic). Allan conducted all of these negotiations in his capacity as Chairman of the AHS (entrepreneur – formal organisation), using Queensland Health resources for communication and transport (self-interest) (Koch 1996). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.3.13 Allan weathers the storm

An ATSIC commissioner said that he had been lobbied (personal – political hierarchy) to change the resolution (entrepreneur – negotiator) and that he and the other commissioner had done so (position – formal organistaion) because "blackfellas can't get $1.7 million, and why should they have to pay for the land" (persuasion – political magic). Mr. Jones, who was not an ATSIC commissioner when that decision

was made, said: "Waterloo has no rights to that land. It was basically a $2 million gift and its costing ATSIC around $100,000 a year to maintain the site. The whole arrangement has just been a mish-mash of lack of cooperation based on lies and misconceptions (self-interest), and to me its bordering on criminal. Allan's is not a community-based organisation. It is a private consortium. ATSIC has the authority to gift land, but only to traditional owners" (Koch 1996).

Between 1988 and 1990, Allan convinced (creation of trust) the former Aboriginal Development Commission provided $2.8 million to Waterloo Pty Ltd to develop an Aboriginal history project. The centre opened for business in August 1990 and went into receivership in October 1990. The Supreme Court appointed a liquidator in January 1991. The company had unsecured creditors of $861,916. Of this, ATSIC provided bank guarantees totalling $522,916, leaving unsecured commercial creditors of $328,000 (Koch 1996). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.4 AHS data analysis

The analysis of the data involves a simple ratio of the number of times that a particular variable was present in each sample to the total number of samples. For this case study there are thirteen samples in which the use of power was detected. Of those thirteen samples, coercive power was used once, reward power was not used, persuasive power was used five times, knowledge power was not used, position power was used ten times, personal power was used four times, and expert power and opportunity power were not used. The data is presented in the Tables as being very low (VL) if it fell between 0 and 19%; low (L) between 20 and 39%; medium (M) between 40 and 59%; high (H) between 60 and 79%; and very high (VH) between 80 and 100%.

For this case study, the use of each type of power expressed as a ratio to the number of samples consists of:

- coercive 1/13 = 7.7% (VL);
- reward 0/13 = 0% (VL);
- persuasive 5/13 = 38.5% (L);
- knowledge 0/13 = 0% (VL);
- position 10/13 = 76.9% (H);
- personal 4/13 = 30.8% (L);
- expert 0/13 = 0% (VL); and
- opportunity 0/13 = 0% (VL).

The same method of coding the data is used for management functions, manager's leadership style, organisational context and outcome. The analysis of the data that was generated by the AHS case study and the identification of the variables is contained in Table 5.2 and its analysis showing the frequency of the variables is shown in Table 5.3.

As shown in Table 5.3, Case 1 revealed a manager who relied on his social skills rather than any professional qualifications to achieve his goals. There is a strong indication of persuasive, position and personal power, and no use of reward, knowledge, expert or opportunity power. The management functions indicate strong use of leader, entrepreneur and resource allocator, with little mentoring or disseminator activity. The style in which he executed his duties were predominantly relationship motivated and through the creation of trust. The manager's *modus operandi* was to shroud the organisation under a cloud of political magic. With no

clearly defined objectives, other than to offer the Government advice on how to improve Aboriginal health, the manager virtually had a free reign to do as he pleased. Allan took advantage of this autonomy at the expense of the people whose interests he purported to represent.

Allan's use of power in the case was self-serving, which stands in contrast to the reputation that he had built up during the 1970s that he was truly dedicated to the Aboriginal cause. This analysis of power does not explain what caused Allan to change from good to bad, with respect to pursuing the welfare of Aboriginal societies.

Table 5-2: AHS data analysis - identification of variables

| Sample | Power | Management function | Manager's leadership style | Organisational context | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Allan's empire | Persuasive<br>Position<br>Personal | Le<br>Li<br>:ader<br>iaison<br>isseminator<br>ntrepreneur | Creation of uncertainty | Political magic | Negative |
| Allan woos ATSIC | Persuasive<br>Position<br>Personal | an<br>neur | Relationship-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Political magic | Negative |
| Allan's private company | Position | Leader | Relationship-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Political magic | Negative |
| Allan defends his empire | Persuasive | Leader | Relationship-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Political hierarchy<br>Political magic | Negative |
| Allan attacks ATSIC | Coercive | Leader | Autocratic<br>Creation of uncertainty | Political hierarchy | Negative |
| Bleeding the system | Position | Leader<br>Liaison<br>Entrepreneur<br>Resource allocator | Relationship-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Political magic | Negative |
| Free overheads | Position | Leader<br>Entrepreneur | Relationship-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Political magic | Negative |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Allan's version of health | Position | Leader<br>Entrepreneur | Relationship-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Political magic | Negative |
| Creating alliances | Position | Leader<br>Entrepreneur<br>Resource allocator | Relationship-motivated | Formal organisation<br>Political magic | Negative |
| Buying votes with the health budget | Position | Leader<br>Entrepreneur<br>Resource allocator | Relationship-motivated | Formal organisation<br>Political magic | Negative |
| Let's party | Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Relationship-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Formal organisation<br>Political magic | Negative |
| Friends in high places | Persuasive<br>Personal | Liaison<br>Entrepreneur<br>Negotiator | Relationship-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy<br>Political magic | Negative |
| Allan weathers the storm | Persuasive<br>Position<br>Personal | Entrepreneur<br>Negotiator | Self-interest<br>Creation of trust | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy<br>Political magic | Negative |

**Table 5-2: AHS data analysis - identification of variables**

| Power | Management function | Manager's leadership style | Organisational context | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| Coercive VL | Figurehead VL | Autocratic VL | The disposition to follow VL | Positive VL |
| Reward VL | Leader H | Participative VL | Values, beliefs and customs VL | Negative VH |
| Persuasive L | Liaison L | Free-rein VL | Formal organisations L | |
| Knowledge VL | Mentor VL | Altruism VL | Formal institutions VL | |
| Position H | Disseminator VL | Self-interest VL | Religious hierarchy VL | |
| Personal L | Spokesman VL | Task-motivated VL | Political hierarchy L | |
| Expert VL | Entrepreneur H | Socio-independent VL | Political science VL | |
| Opportunity VL | Disturbance handler VL | Relationship-motivated H | Political magic VH | |
| | Resource allocator L | The creation of trust H | | |
| | Negotiator VL | Disruptive leadership VL | | |
| | | The creation of uncertainty VL | | |
| | | | | |

**Table 5-3: AHS data analysis - frequency of variables**

## 5.5 Case Study 2 – Legal Service

This case study describes the operation of an Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS) that was incorporated in January 1982 for the purpose of providing legal services in a major Queensland city. Because this study contains primary data, the identity of the organisation and its personnel are not revealed.

For this organisation, I was unsure about how to gain entry. I had no special relationship with any of the members. I had no special position in society that I could use as leverage. At the end of the day it was the community spirit of the organisation that persuaded them to extend a helping hand to a PhD research student. My application could just as easily have been rejected. I do not believe that my Aboriginality played a role in their decision because many of the staff in the office were from all walks of life. I imagine that I was seen as another person who wanted to do something good for the Aboriginal course.

Initially, contact was by phone. I knew nobody in the organisation apart from a retired Director. The only help that he was able to give me was the phone number of the organisation. My initial contact was with KJ, the CEO. The organisation had been recently in a publicised conflict and was therefore understandably cautious about allowing a stranger to have access to their premises. This was the normal kind of gate keeping that could be expected from any such organisation. Further, it was particularly important for this organisation, as being a legal practice, one of its charges was to protect the privacy of its clients.

When I attended the office to have an interview, KJ and KK, the Principal Legal Officer, questioned me as to the nature of my research. After being satisfied of my

intentions, I was tentatively approved to do my research, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. This represented a higher level of gate keeping. Once the Board gave approval, KJ told me to liaise with PW, the Financial Controller. This was to sort out the normal arrangements as to where I will be sitting and what equipment I could use. I did as requested by PW, but when the day was near I phoned to confirm my starting time. PW was not available to take my phone call so I left a message for him to return my call. In that message, I also informed him of my intentions to commence work shortly. To my surprise, it was not PW that returned my call but KK. From what I could gather, PW must have thought it prudent to check with KK. KK insisted that I write another letter to state exactly what I would be doing in the organisation. To my understanding, the gate keeping exercise had already been overcome. Apparently, this was not the case. I put this down to a lack of communication between the three senior officers in the organisation and myself. Once KK received the final letter, approval was given for my research to begin.

It is important to understand some of the history of the ALS prior to the case study. As a result of complaints to the Registrar, an examination of the affairs of the ALS was undertaken in accordance with Section 60 of the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act. Following the examiner's report, the Registrar appointed an Administrator to the ALS effective from 11th August 1995. The Administrator took action to address the financial problems of the corporation, effected a change to the rules of the corporation to make them more functional and stabilised the operations of the corporation.

### 5.5.1 No leadership

In May 1996, the Registrar formed the view (position) that the time had come to return control of the affairs of the corporation to its members. On 23rd May 1996, a delegate of the Registrar conducted a meeting of members (liaison) to elect a new governing committee (political hierarchy). Unfortunately, and for reasons known only to those concerned, no one was willing to nominate for a position on the committee (self-interest). The meeting was closed without a committee being elected. This is a negative outcome.

### 5.5.2 Immanent termination

After consulting with the Australian Government Solicitor (liaison), the Registrar formed the view (position) that the only viable option available to him in those circumstances was to take action to wind up the affairs of the corporation (autocratic). On 31st May 1996, winding up proceedings commenced (formal organisation) and a directions hearing was set for 2nd July 1996. This is a negative outcome.

### 5.5.3 Reacting to crisis

In the meantime, the Registrar received representations (liaison) from members of the corporation (participative) requesting that a further meeting be held to elect a committee. Members provided assurances (creation of trust) that nominations would be received for the vacant committee positions. The Registrar agreed that it would be appropriate to proceed with a further meeting to attempt to elect a new committee to the corporation (formal organisation) and undertook to withdraw the winding up application (position) if the meeting was successful. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.4 A new life

On 1st July 1996, a delegate of the Registrar conducted a meeting (liaison) that resulted in the election of a new committee to the corporation (participative - creation of trust - formal organisation). In light of the election of a new committee to the corporation, the Registrar withdrew court proceedings to wind up the affairs of the corporation. On 9th July 1996, the Registrar cancelled the appointment of the Administrator (position) and the newly elected committee resumed control of the corporation. This is a positive outcome.

My initial perception of this organisation was that it was very busy. The workload was being coped with adequately, but there was no spare time for any member of the staff to engage in conversation with me when we were introduced. A management review of the organisation prior to my study, however, indicated that this was not always the case; the review highlighted the apparent lack of managerial control and direction and questionable leadership from the Board of Directors.

### 5.5.5 Leading from within

The current CEO ran the formal organisation very effectively (position). It had a high level of efficiency (leader). The organisational culture was one of being very busy, professional and free of internal conflict and corruption (task motivated – disposition to follow). There was a transparency of activities and conversation that would not normally occur in the presence of covert activities (creation of trust). The CEO made his presence felt and kept the operation running smoothly by maintaining close contact with all of the staff and their activities and having an open door policy in his office. This is a positive outcome.

Upon my arrival at the organisation, I was warmly welcomed by all of the staff. They were very friendly and cooperative. When I told them that my research was in organisation behaviour, most were quite interested. Some had not heard of this discipline before. I left my organisational behaviour text on the desk and told everyone that they were welcome to have a look at it. No one did. I thought this a bit strange, considering that this was a legal practice. I concluded that they must have been too busy with their work.

One of the lawyers (RF) was sufficiently interested in my work to show me his copy of a text on the leadership skills of Attila the Hun. In return, I showed him my text on The Art of War by Sun Tzu. He informed me that the methodology of Sun Tzu is indeed very useful in forming the corporate strategy for this organisation because they are in constant conflict with a hostile external environment.

### 5.5.6 Empowerment

In terms of the use of individual power by management (position), fewer examples were evident in this case than in the other cases. All of the staff seemed to be very nice to each other. No one attempted to gain more than what they had in terms of work locations or equipment. Power involves making someone do something that they would not ordinarily have done. What was clear was that no one had to be coerced or persuaded in any way to make him or her do something (free-rein). For example, an agent from community housing came to discuss some issues relating to their clients (liaison). This meeting was with the Senior Administration Officer (SAO) (formal organisation). Two of the Field Officers (FO) were also to attend. When SAO was walking toward the meeting room, the FOs anticipated her move and stood up to go there with her. This is a case where the FOs were not under any pressure from the

SAO, but were doing the work because they believed in what they were doing (task motivated). My interpretation of this event was that the FOs would have attended to the matter in any case, with or without the SAO in attendance. This view is based on my observation that the organisation had a strong culture of willingness and cooperation (disposition to follow). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.7 Monitoring the empowered

The situation here was that, for the most part, the task motivated staff seemed to run the formal organisation on 'auto pilot'. The nine solicitors went about their daily tasks and the six field officers performed their duties fairly autonomously, guided where necessary by the leadership of the solicitors. There was no evidence that anyone was deviating from what was expected from him or her in terms of practicing the law. However, FC found it necessary to issue some guidelines to monitor the use of mobile phones, and the CEO found it necessary to 'fine tune' the use of the organisation's motor vehicles so as not to hinder the organisation's operations (position). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.8 Gate keeping

One morning a rather agitated client unexpectedly presented herself at the reception counter and demanded to see one of the solicitors, but the solicitor was busy on the phone. The receptionist (LM) had no choice but to ask her to wait (spokesman). The client had no choice but to follow LM's instructions. There is a physical barrier between the public and the staff that is controlled by a locked door. This was a clear case of LM using her position to prevent the client from storming into the office of the solicitor. Had the physical barrier not been there, it is reasonable to expect that the client would have entered the office. The use of the physical barrier by LM was not

out of the ordinary. It is a standard operating procedure for the formal organisation. Nevertheless, it demonstrated the use of power by organisation procedures (autocratic), not necessarily by LM personally. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.9 Cooperation and harmony

Two FOs had a discussion (persuasion) over who should work a certain shift over the weekend, given that this formal organisation must provide 24 hours assistance seven days per week. They came to a suitable arrangement (negotiator) based on respect and understanding for each other (values, beliefs, customs). There was no evidence of the use of power or stand over tactics at all (participative – free-rein). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.10 Assessing the threat

By way of casual conversation, the CEO and I were discussing the issue of funding of Aboriginal legal services in general. The point was raised about the apparent illegal operation of the AKA Legal Services Secretariat (AKALSS). The evidence against that organisation is significant. I offered to present their case to the Minister. At that time the CEO (leader) and I thought that it seemed like a good idea. Before this went ahead, he had to clear it (negotiate) with the Board of Directors (political hierarchy). To the CEO's mind it was a risk. If the powers that be were to start looking at Aboriginal legal services in general, this formal organisation might end up being the target (self-interest). The result was that the BoD through the CEO told me to drop the issue (position). This was a case of the BoD using its legitimate authority to censor the debate for the sake of its own survival. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.11 Teamwork

This formal organisation employed two legal stenographers. The solicitors left a good deal of their typing to the stenographers, as they were fully occupied with their legal duties (leader). The practice was to dictate their instructions onto a tape (position) and the stenographers then prepared the documents. I spent considerable time observing how the solicitors allocated their work to the stenographers. It was a friendly and cooperative relationship with no evidence of the use of power (participative). The stenographers are not forced into anything (task motivated). All actions performed by them were something that they would have done anyway (disposition to follow). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.12 A classless society

One of the solicitors was having some furniture delivered. He needed some help so he asked (persuasive) one of the FOs for help; "John, can you give me a hand, mate?" John willingly gave him his assistance (task motivated – disposition to follow). The manner in which he asked for the help reminded me of someone asking an old friend for a favour (negotiator). There was no suggestion of class distinction or group status. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.13 Rules and regulations

The intricate and at times inconvenient requirement (position) to indicate one's whereabouts (monitor) on a white board near the receptionist is followed by all (formal organisation). That included the most senior members such as PLO (creation of trust). The general atmosphere was an organisational culture that did see instructions flow from top to bottom, but they were not received as orders in the true

sense. More than anything else, they were viewed as polite requests (relationship motivated - disposition to follow). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.14 Empowerment

Empowerment was also a feature of Case 2. For example, when one of the solicitors had a court appearance, he needed the assistance of a FO (formal organisation). The solicitor (leader) was ready to go, but the FO was on the phone. "Come on, get off the phone," he said (position). The field officer replied, "Just start walking, and I will catch up with you". The tone of the solicitor's voice is important to note here. On face value it might appear that he was using his power, but in fact it was something quite different (creation of trust). The request to get off the phone was made in the context of two people who are best friends talking to each other and organising their work (relationship motivated). The solicitor started walking and when the FO finished his phone call he caught up with him (disposition to follow). There was no indication that the exertion of power was being contemplated (free-rein). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.15 Networking

One day I was introduced to the Board of Directors (political hierarchy). They assured me of their support (leader - position), particularly when it was established that most of the Board members knew members of my family (relationship motivated). This event demonstrated the use of networking. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.16 Resource allocator

When some new computers arrived at the office, FC decided where they should go and who should be using them (position – resource allocator). I could not detect any lobbying by anyone. They went to the people who needed them most and their set up

was so smooth as to be almost unnoticed. The relationship between the senior and junior staff is one of friendliness and cooperation. The organisational culture was one of 'focus on the mission' (task motivated). It was at the coalface in terms of the immediacy of the feed back loop. From what could be observed, this greatly influenced the formal organisation's culture. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.17 Internal harmony

One day I felt that nothing of interest was happening with respect to the use of power. I arrived very early at work to observe the events. This appeared to be an ideal place to work if one had an interest in practicing law. They produced good results where it counts – in the courtroom. There was no evidence of waste or mismanagement (monitor). The lines of internal communication were open and the personnel issues were transparent (formal organisation). Matters of law were quite properly kept confidential (creation of trust). The focus was entirely on the business of the day (task motivated). It certainly appeared that the use of power was for external relationships only. As a result of being under siege from a powerful external coalition, group cohesion appeared high. That could explain the marked difference between what I observed and what transpired previously when the organisation was being mismanaged. There existed a high level of staff self-discipline and morale appeared to be high (personal - disposition to follow). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.18 The role of leader

One day I observed a small amount of friction between the solicitors and the management team. The solicitors naturally evolved into a collegiate group, but that does not suggest that they have created a class distinction. By all accounts, the solicitors treated all other staff with respect and friendliness. From what I could

gather, the friction was the result of some disagreement over procedural matters, the details to which I was not privy. The solicitors had their view on how things should be managed, and the management had their views (values, beliefs, customs). While differences did exist, it did not escalate into open confrontation (disturbance handler). At the end of the day, it was the legitimate authority of the CEO that prevailed (position – formal organisation). There was no suggestion that the solicitors might have used their expert power to win the argument (creation of trust). The issue was one of managerial procedures and was therefore beyond their paradigm of legal practice. In other words, the management did the managing (leader) and the solicitors did their legal work (task motivated). No one was able to interfere with each other's work to any significant degree. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.19 Dealing with the external coalition

During the course of my research I became aware that not a lot of power was being used internally in the ALS. However, there was a twofold relationship to the external environment. On the one hand, there were the organisation's clients who required legal representation. On the other hand, there was a powerful external coalition consisting of the organisation's political enemies, particularly the AKA Legal Services Secretariat (AKALSS).

One morning I arrived at work and was approached by the CEO. There was a good deal of destructive politicking going on externally and the organisation needed to counter this by lobbying the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs directly. The CEO asked me (persuasive) if I could arrange a meeting between the legal service and the Minister (liaison), with whom I had a political relationship. They knew that I was a member of his political party (political hierarchy), and that I had some degree of

access to the Minister. I agreed to do this (relationship motivated). This was an example of networking outside of the organisation. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.20 Gate keeping

Unfortunately, I was not able to make contact directly with the Minister. I could only make it as far as his secretary and she was doing a very good job at gate keeping (position). The Minister was particularly busy that day. The meeting was in jeopardy of not materialising. One of the Board members decided to use her friendship with Bob, Minister Heron's right hand man (relationship motivated). This method of gaining access to the Minister succeeded where my previous attempt had failed. The end result was that they had their meeting with the Minister and established a secretive and direct line of communication with him (liaison – political hierarchy). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.21 The coalition attacks

Most of the Aboriginal legal services have formed a coalition under the auspices of AKALSS. Because this Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS) (Case 2) refused to join the coalition, it was under constant attack by those that did. While those legal services that chose to be with the coalition received adequate and guaranteed funding, those who were not in the coalition were at risk of loosing their funds. The CEO showed me a copy of a letter dated 2nd July 1996 that Commissioner 'Bruce' sent to the Chairman of the Regional Council (figurehead – political hierarchy). In that letter, it is clearly stated that Bruce does not want this formal organisation to receive any funds for its operations (autocratic – self-interest). The letter states that the organisation is not entitled to receive funds based on its previous mismanagement (coercive – disruptive leadership). There is no question that the organisation has a colourful

history, but it has since been cleared by the Registrar to continue its operations. This is a negative outcome.

### 5.5.22 Controlling the agenda

The following is a sequence of events that led to the making of a complaint to the Registrar by this formal organisation. The summary was constructed by reviewing the organisation's correspondence from this organisation to the Registrar, news items from *The Courier-Mail*, and some details from the Registrar's 1997-98 annual report (liaison).

In October 1997, the organisation received written advice from both the AC Legal Services Secretariat (ACLSS) and AKALSS that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for both organisations would be held during that month (October) at the Gold Coast, Queensland. Fourteen days later on 27th October 1997, the dates of the AGMs were changed to the 18th and 19th of December 1997.

In a notice from ACLS and AKALSS dated 29th October 1997, the 1997 AGMs were cancelled until 1998 (position). In a notice dated 5th February 1998 the ALS was advised that the AGMs for ACLS and AKALSS would now be held at the Gold Coast on the 10th and 11th of March 1998 (disruptive leadership). The correspondence from ACLS and AKALSS at all times referred to the ALS as a member. On the basis of their 'membership', the ALS was provided with copies of what were described as 'new constitutions' for both ACLS and AKALSS (disseminator).

On the 17th of February 1998, lawyers from the ALS expressed some concern over the proposed new constitutions (negotiator). This concern was communicated to all 'member' organisations as well as to ACLS and AKALSS.

Shortly after that communiqué, on the 19th of February 1998, the ALS received a fax advising that the venue for the AGMs was being moved from the Gold Coast, Queensland, to Alice Springs in the Northern Territory. No explanation was provided.

Investigations by the lawyers from the ALS uncovered anecdotal evidence to the effect that the change of venue was 'dictated' (autocratic) with a view of preventing 'natural members' of both ACLS and AKALSS from attending (self-interest). The procedures that were adopted in notifying members of the AGM, the locality at which the AGM was held and the selective payment of travel expenses to 'friendly' members disadvantaged and disenfranchised the majority of members. This is a negative outcome.

### 5.5.23 Gate keeping

Further actions by the AKALSS (position - leader) were put in place to prevent the ALS from participating in the procedures at Alice Springs. It was alleged that the ALS did not pay 'fees normally payable' for such member organisations. There is no provision within the existing constitution to levy fees upon members, yet it was insisted that fees be paid (autocratic - political science). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.5.24 Creating reality

The correspondence revealed further anomalies in that certain members' names were either added to or deleted from the membership list by AKALSS (position - leader) without so much as a single application from any of the 'members' (entrepreneur). Someone simply deleted 'hostile' names and added 'friendly' names to the membership list (formal organisation - self-interest). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.5.25 Making your own rules

There were a number of 'motions on notice' provided to the Executive of AKALSS by one of its members (formal organisation), but they were disregarded (position – leader) following another motion at the meeting that the motions on notice not be addressed (self-interest – political science). Those motions on notice raised concerns that went to the validity of the meeting and the proposed constitution. It would appear that the company in the general meeting purported to silence the member's concerns (disruptive leadership) by moving a motion that those questions not be put (autocratic). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.5.26 Screening the participants

The management of the AKALSS (position - leader) had the meeting of a Queensland based Secretariat (formal organisation) in Alice Springs at considerable public expense (autocratic – self-interest – political hierarchy). Voting at the meeting was open to any and all present that were known to be 'friendly'. That included 'delegates' of so-called member organisations, non-indigenous people and non-members (entrepreneur). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.5.27 Shortcuts to success

After the acceptance of the new constitution by the majority of delegates (political science), the Executive (position - leader) of the organisation immediately commenced operating under the new constitution (autocratic) without it gaining the Registrar's approval of it (entrepreneur). A solicitor from the ALS observed that the changes to the constitution were unlawful and outside of the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act on the grounds that one organisation cannot be a member of another

organisation and hence there is no lawful basis to levy membership fees from 'members'. This is a negative outcome.

### 5.5.28 The tyranny of distance

The AKALSS's (position – leader) exercise of having the meeting in Alice Springs was expensive. It involved flying 'friendly' delegates to Alice Springs and paying for their travel and accommodation (resource allocator). Travel and accommodation expenses were refused for 'hostile' delegates (autocratic – self-interest). This was a simple case of the power brokers allowing only safe items onto the agenda (political hierarchy – political science). This is a negative outcome for the organisation.

### 5.5.29 The umpire acts

The details of the alleged irregularities of both organisations were conveyed to the Registrar. They included problems with membership matters, irregularities with the conduct of meetings, procedures not being followed and the rules not being observed. In view of the complaints, the Registrar (position – leader) considered it necessary, pursuant to section 60 of the Act, to authorise the examinations of the affairs of the corporations (disturbance handler). The Registrar therefore authorised Mr. Geoff Hardy of Mining Elton Lawyers in Brisbane to conduct the examinations and provide a report (creation of trust). The examinations were arranged to commence on 25th May 1998. This is a positive outcome for the organisation.

### 5.5.30 Using the system

On 22nd May, both organisations applied to the Federal Court, Queensland Registry, seeking an order of review and for relief, pursuant to section 39 of the Judiciary Act 1903. The application sought review and relief of the Registrar's decision (position –

task motivated) to authorise the examinations and an injunction order restraining the examinations from proceeding until the final hearing and determination of the application for an order to review. Due to the urgency and importance of the matters, the short notice provided by ACLS and AKALSS to the Registrar in respect of the legal proceeding, and in order to avoid an adverse determination against the Registrar, undertakings were exchanged (negotiation) between the Registrar, Geoff Hardy and both corporations to preserve the *status quo*. This is a negative outcome.

### 5.5.31 Stretching it out

The Federal Court heard the matter on 22nd May 1998 and gave directions for the future conduct of proceedings (position). The matter was then adjourned (negotiation) until 19th June 1998. On that day, because the senior barrister representing ACLS and AKALSS was indisposed (disruptive leadership) and unable to attend, the matter was again adjourned until 23rd June 1998 (formal organisation). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.5.32 Sniper fire

The coalition launched another attack. They appointed their own solicitor to act on behalf of ACLS and AKALSS. They once again approached the Supreme Court in an attempt to regain control of the assets and to dismiss the Registrar's Administrator. The Administrator was aware of this action and arrived at the Federal Court at the same time. He approached the judge and produced his credentials. He produced evidence of his authority from the Registrar to be the only valid representative of the organisations. The judge ruled in favour of the Administrator (autocratic - position – disturbance handler) and the barrister was dismissed. This is a positive outcome for the organisation.

### 5.5.33 Pushing the limit

The hearing took place on the 23rd of June 1998. On the 29th of June 1998, Justice Collins handed down his judgement. The judge dismissed the applications for injunctions and ordered ACLS and AKALSS to pay the Registrar's costs (position). When the Administrator returned to the organisations' offices, he was locked out (autocratic). He had to return to the Federal Court and get an order to gain entry (disturbance handler). He returned with the police and successfully forced entry to the premises. He was then able to seize all financial records, bank accounts, and other relevant documents (task motivated). At the time of writing, he was still examining the books. As at 30 June 1998, arrangements were being made to proceed with the examinations, subject to any possible appeal by ACLS and AKALSS. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.5.34 The Phoenix rises

The organisations were eventually dissolved under the AC&A Act and reformed under the Corporations Law as private companies (position – leader). That move effectively put them beyond the reach of the Registrar and the Minister (entrepreneur – autocratic – self-interest). Under section 14 of the ATSIC Act, the sum of $80,000 was granted for the legal representation of an Aboriginal client. Bruce then had absolute control over the management of those funds. He was answerable to no one within the Aboriginal industry (political magic). This is a negative outcome.

## 5.6 Legal service data analysis

The data and the identification of the variables for this case study are listed in Table 5.4 and Table 5.5, and the analysis of that data and the frequency of the variables are

presented in Table 5.6 and Table 5.7. Originally, I had intended to view this organisation as a single case study. However, as the events unfolded it soon became obvious that I was dealing with two separate, but connected, entities. I made the decision to classify these as the organisation's internal environment (Case 2a) and the external environment (Case 2b). The reason for this was that the internal environment was being managed by the CEO, while the external environment was being managed by his 'enemy'.

### 5.6.1 The internal environment

Overwhelmingly, Case 2a indicates the manager's use of position power, with some persuasion power where necessary. The most obvious management function was that of leader, with reasonable indications of liaison and monitor functions. The CEO did very little as a spokesman or negotiator, leaving that function to the Board of Directors. There was little evidence of disturbance handler or resource allocator, which in light of the trust and empowerment characterising the organisation's culture, suggests a well-run organisation that followed its established rules and procedures.

The leadership style that the manager brought to the workplace was strongest in the area of task-motivation; he was there to get the job done. He fostered a trusting environment and encouraged the members to participate in the decision-making process. He enjoyed a good relationship with the staff and allowed a free-reign for their activities. On the odd occasion he engaged in autocratic leadership, but this was a positive action as it produced good results for the organisation (as judged on the basis of the organisation's formal mission statement).

The context in which this organisation operated was very formal. It was, after all, a legal service. The members had confidence in their manager and willingly followed

all directives. It was obvious that the members' behaviour was guided by their own values and beliefs, because they willingly did the right thing without any instructions from their superiors. Overall, the organisation's guiding light was provided by the Board, and this was acknowledged and respected by all members.

Occasionally, things didn't go as planned. There were some negative outcomes, but they were not the result of immoral or illegal acts. They simply happened for reasons that were beyond the control of the manager. The positive outcomes that were produced by this organisation far outweighed any negativities. The law was practiced vigorously to the benefit of their clients.

### 5.6.2 The external environment

The external environment does not consist of a single formal organisation, but a coalition of formal organisations and interest groups. Bruce used his position as an ATSIC Commissioner to undermine the legal service in every way. He clearly did not want this organisation to exist and used coercion or persuasion to get his way. The strongest management functions in Case 2b were leader, where Bruce always played a key role. He used a broad range of other management functions except monitor. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this role was performed for him by others.

His management leadership style was predominantly autocratic. His actions were perceived to be based on his self-interest. Interestingly, he used a combination of creating trust or disruptive leadership to achieve his goals.

Bruce used the formal organisational structure of ATSIC to his advantage. He was elected to a position of power and he used this political advantage to achieve his ends. From the perspective of the legal service, the actions of the external coalition

produced very negative results for its clients. A lot of resources and energy were allocated to fighting the external coalition when they should have been dedicated to the service of their clients.

Table 5-4: ALS internal environment data – identification of variables

| Sample | Power | Management function | Manager's leadership style | Organisational context | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No leadership | Position | Liaison | Self-interest | Political hierarchy | Negative |
| Immanent termination | Position | Liaison | Autocratic | Formal organisation | Negative |
| Reacting to crisis | Position | Liaison | Participative<br>Creation of trust | Formal organisation | Positive |
| A new life | Position | Liaison | Participative<br>Creation of trust | Formal organisation | Positive |
| Leading from within | Position | Leader | Task-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Disposition to follow<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| Empowerment | Position | Liaison | Free-rein<br>Task-motivated | Disposition to follow<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| Monitoring the empowered | Position | Leader<br>Monitor | Task-motivated | Formal organisation | Positive |
| Gate keeping | Position | Spokesman | Autocratic | Formal organisation | Positive |
| Cooperation and harmony | Persuasive | Negotiator | Participative<br>Free-rein | Values, beliefs, customs<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| Assessing the threat | Position | Leader | Autocratic<br>Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Positive |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teamwork | Position | Leader | Participative<br>Task-motivated | Disposition to follow<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| A classless society | Persuasive | Negotiator | Task-motivated | Disposition to follow | Positive |
| Rules and regulations | Position | Monitor | Task-motivated<br>Relationship-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Disposition to follow<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| Empowerment | Position | Leader | Free-rein<br>Relationship-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Disposition to follow<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| Networking | Position | Leader | Relationship-motivated | Political hierarchy | Positive |
| Resource allocator | Position | Resource allocator | Task-motivated | Formal organisation | Positive |
| Internal harmony | Personal | Monitor | Task-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Disposition to follow<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| The role of leader | Position | Leader<br>Disturbance handler | Task-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Values, beliefs, customs<br>Formal organisations | Positive |

**Table 5-4: ALS internal environment data – identification of variables**

Table 5-5: ALS external environment data – identification of variables

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dealing with the external coalition | Persuasive | Liaison | Relationship-motivated | Political hierarchy | Positive |
| Gate keeping | Persuasive | Liaison | Relationship motivated | Political hierarchy | Positive |
| The coalition attacks | Coercive | Figurehead | Autocratic<br>Self-interest<br>Disruptive leadership | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Negative |
| Controlling the agenda | Position | Liaison<br>Disseminator<br>Negotiator | Autocratic<br>Self-interest<br>Disruptive leadership | Formal organisation | Negative |
| Gate keeping | Position | Leader | Autocratic | Formal organisation<br>Political science | Negative |
| Creating reality | Position | Entrepreneur | Autocratic<br>Self-interest | Formal organisation | Negative |
| Making your own rules | Position | Leader | Autocratic<br>Self-interest<br>Disruptive leadership | Formal organisation<br>Political science | Negative |
| Screening the participants | Position | Leader<br>Entrepreneur | Autocratic<br>Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Negative |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Shortcut to success | Position | Leader<br>Entrepreneur | Autocratic | Formal organisation<br>Political science | Negative |
| The tyranny of distance | Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy<br>Political science | Negative |
| The umpire acts | Position | Leader<br>Disturbance handler | Creation of trust | Formal organisation | Positive |
| Using the system | Position | Negotiator | Task-motivated | Formal organisation | Positive |
| Stretching it out | Position | Negotiator | Disruptive leadership | Formal organisation | Negative |
| Sniper fire | Position | Disturbance handler | Autocratic<br>Task-motivated | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Positive |
| Pushing the limit | Position | Disturbance handler | Autocratic<br>Task-motivated | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Positive |
| The Phoenix rises | Position | Leader<br>Entrepreneur | Autocratic<br>Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political magic | Negative |

**Table 5-5: ALS external environment data – identification of variables**

| Power | Management function | Manager's leadership style | Organisational context | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| Coercive VL | Figurehead VL | Autocratic VL | The disposition to follow L | Positive VH |
| Reward VL | Leader L | Participative L | Values, beliefs and customs VL | Negative VL |
| Persuasive VL | Liaison L | Free-rein VL | Formal organisations VH | |
| Knowledge VL | Monitor VL | Altruism VL | Formal institutions VL | |
| Position VH | Disseminator VL | Self-interest VL | Religious hierarchy VL | |
| Personal VL | Spokesman VL | Task-motivated M | Political hierarchy VL | |
| Expert VL | Entrepreneur VL | Socio-independent VL | Political science VL | |
| Opportunity VL | Disturbance handler VL | Relationship-motivated VL | Political magic VL | |
| | Resource allocator VL | The creation of trust L | | |
| | Negotiator VL | Disruptive leadership VL | | |
| | | The creation of uncertainty VL | | |
| | | | | |

**Table 5-6: ALS internal environment data – frequency of variables**

| Power | Management function | Manager's leadership style | Organisational context | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| Coercive VL | Figurehead VL | Autocratic H | The disposition to follow VL | Positive L |
| Reward VL | Leader M | Participative VL | Values, beliefs and customs VL | Negative H |
| Persuasive VL | Liaison VL | Free-rein VL | Formal organisations VH | |
| Knowledge VL | Monitor VL | Altruism VL | Formal institutions VL | |
| Position VH | Disseminator VL | Self-interest M | Religious hierarchy VL | |
| Personal VL | Spokesman VL | Task-motivated L | Political hierarchy M | |
| Expert VL | Entrepreneur L | Socio-independent VL | Political science L | |
| Opportunity VL | Disturbance handler VL | Relationship-motivated VL | Political magic VL | |
| | Resource allocator VL | The creation of trust L | | |
| | Negotiator VL | Disruptive leadership L | | |
| | | The creation of uncertainty VL | | |
| | | | | |

**Table 5-7: ALS external environment data – frequency of variables**

## 5.7 Case Study 3 - Media

This case study consists of primary data gathered on an Aboriginal community radio station located in a major Queensland city. The station plays country music with at least 20% Indigenous content. It is partly funded by ATSIC, but has the capacity to raise additional funds through limited commercial activity.

### 5.7.1 Gaining Entry

I did not know anyone in this organisation so I made a phone call to the General Manager (GM) and asked him for an interview at the station. He willingly agreed to meet me and we subsequently agreed upon the nature of my participation in his organisation. The GM negotiated a *quid pro quo* with me in that I would undertake to assist the radio station to formulate a marketing plan (task motivated). This was agreed upon and I was immediately given permission to do my research by the authority of the GM (position – leader). He was not required to take the matter to his Board of Directors.

I arrived at work on Tuesday the 31st of March 1998. It appeared to be a normal working day for the organisation. As I already knew the GM from previous meetings, I was able to walk straight into his office and say hello. This was a form of friendship that had developed over the previous few weeks. He welcomed me into the building and introduced me to all of the staff. As in the previous case study (the legal service), all of the staff appeared pleased to meet me. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.2 The stamp of authority

There was one person (N) who appeared to be a little displeased about his relationship with the organisation. He told me that before he went on leave three weeks ago, he was the program manager. Since he arrived back at work, he did not know what position he held. The decision had been made by the GM (position – leader) in his absence to remove him from that role (autocratic). In casual discussions with him, I felt that he was in a state of extreme dissatisfaction with the organisation (or its management) and the more general notion of living and working in this city. He expressed a strong desire to work in Sydney. I am not certain yet as to the reasons for his dissatisfaction. I did not intend to approach him directly at this stage. I thought that perhaps later on I might be able to generate some narratives on the matter.

I had a conversation with the Finance Officer (FO) who works in the GM's office. I tried to initiate a debate on Wik to gauge her response. I gained the impression that she already had an answer before I asked the question. While the question was specifically directed at the Wik decision, she must have thought that I meant the broader question of the Prime Minister's ten-point plan. This was not the case, and it took me some effort to steer the conversation back to the basis of the high court decision. FO holds a sort of gatekeeper position, as she sits in the GM's office and does much of the important administrative work. I made a mental note to observe this arrangement as a potential source of power.

Narratives in the staff room at lunchtime did not reveal anything unusual. There was talk of some recent social events and the local rugby teams. There was the possibility that power did play a role in the functioning of the station, but it was not apparent on my first official day here. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.3 Empowerment and creativity

I established a good relationship with the Librarian (TL) who has some very strong views on certain matters. She is able to have a good discussion on a wide range of issues and I thought that this might have been an indication of knowledge power. Just how she goes about doing her daily routine was yet to be established. There was a very limited amount of space here so by necessity I was in close contact with all of the staff. I set up my base in the staff room, where I was able to observe and interact with all that came and went. I just sat there for most of the day using my laptop computer to record the events as I observed them. At that stage, this seemed a very relaxed and comfortable environment. No one seemed to get overly concerned about things like regimentation and sticking exactly to rules (creation of trust). I thought that the creative nature of a radio station had something to do with the culture (disposition to follow). In a manner similar to the legal service, I could sense that the focus was on getting the job done (task motivated). That being the case, the GM (position – leader) seemed to let each person do his or her own thing (free-rein). He was certainly not being coercive or dictatorial in any way. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.4 Leading from within

The cleaner (TC) went about his business with a good deal of confidence. He did not show any signs of being intimidated or put down by any of the other employees. In a social sense, he was exactly equal to everyone else. He simply had a different job to do. He showed no indication of an inferiority complex. That was consistent with the organisation's culture, which was one of acceptance of diversity and respect for the individual (creation of trust). One of the interesting things that I noticed was the way in which the more 'glamorous' appointments such as announcer/presenter were

portrayed. The fact is that in a social sense they were treated in the organisation much the same way as the cleaner. Everyone was at the same level in terms of social status. Obviously, there were certain functional aspects of the organisation that did make some people more powerful than others. For example, the GM had the legitimate authority (position – leader) to issue certain instructions to various staff members. I observed him giving instructions on a number of occasions; he did so in such a manner that the staff member did it not because of the GM's authority, but because they believed that it was the right thing to do for the radio station (disposition to follow). There was no suggestion that they would not ordinarily have done it. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.5 Building up business

The organisation's relationship with the external environment was at times rather trying. This was particularly so with its major sponsor, ATSIC. The organisation was facing a reduction in its funding, and this had prompted the GM (and the BoD) to seek alternative sources of revenue (task motivated). Through my university networks (relationship motivated), I was able to be of some assistance in this matter. In particular, I was able to arrange the development of a marketing plan by getting the radio station assigned as a marketing class project for MBA students (persuasive – negotiator). This approach was adopted by the GM and it was arranged for the MBA students to visit the radio station and to commence the project (participative). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.6 A helping hand

In a meeting with the FO, we discussed the issue of grants for this organisation from various agencies, and I offered to write some grant applications for her (knowledge –

negotiator – political science). She agreed that it might be a good idea, and I started the exercise (participative – relationship motivated). In general, people seemed uninhibited in offering to help others as well as to receive it. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.7 A family affair

I observed that the organisation's electronic technician (ET) arranged for his wife and baby daughter to come into the office for a casual visit. They were greeted warmly by one and all, including the GM (position – leader). It seemed a perfectly normal situation for staff to have visitors at work (creation of trust). Perhaps this flexibility was permitted (free-rein) because they worked such long and unusual hours at times. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.8 Dedicated to the cause

As the technician, ET did all of the trouble-shooting and repairs to the electronic equipment, including the computers (monitor). He was the only technician that they had, and therefore he had the potential to use his expert power to control events to his own advantage. That did not happen, however (values, beliefs, customs). He was as dedicated to the organisation's mission as any other staff member was (participative – task motivated). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.9 Laying down the law

At a staff meeting one day, I sat off to one side in the staff room reading a newspaper while listening to the conversation unfolding at the meeting table. All of the staff spoke freely about the various issues under discussion. There was one incident in which the GM addressed the matter that one of the announcers had phoned the night

before and asked if he could find someone else to do his shift for him the next day, as he wanted the day off work to move into another house. The GM refused and used his legitimate authority as the GM (position – leader) to enforce the duty roster as it had been written. The GM went on to explain to the staff that in the ordinary course of things, such matters were taken care of on the weekend in their own time. If an emergency situation arose, he was prepared to negotiate some arrangement. If it was the case that a move could only be made in the middle of the week, the person must have known about it for some time. In such cases, he would expect to be approached a couple of weeks in advance to make the necessary arrangements. The GM was quite firm and authoritative about this matter (autocratic). That was the first time that I had seen him use his power with any real authority. Normally, he just walked around the station interacting with all of the staff, using a style of leadership that was relaxed and conducive to easy conversation (task motivated). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.10 Leading from the front

On another occasion, I had a long conversation with N who at the time held the appointment of Executive Producer. He relayed to me that he at one time he had been the Program Manager. He said he went on leave for a couple of weeks and upon his return found that the GM (position – leader) had moved him across to the appointment of Executive Producer (autocratic). The change was a management decision by the GM in response to the BoD instruction (formal organisation) that the station must increase its political profile (task motivated). The GM apparently thought that he was better suited to that task than N. N told me that there was no negotiation as to how the situation should be managed. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.11 Calming the waters

When the GM (position – leader) assumed responsibility for the Program Manager's duties, N was not at all happy. N further explained to me that he was the only staff member to hold any university degree (expert). My perception of this comment was that he was trying to convey to me that he was better qualified than the GM (political science). If indeed that was the way he felt, then there would be a reasonable amount of tension between the expert power of N and the legitimate authority of the GM. At the time, I did not observe any signs of open conflict or challenge. The GM indicated to me that he was aware of N's position and feelings, but nothing surfaced in the organisation by way of open conflict. What was very clear to me was the fact that the GM had the support of the community and the BoD (creation of trust) through his lifelong association with Aboriginal affairs (relationship motivated). N, on the other hand, had little experience in that area. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.12 Legitimising his position

The power of longer-term relationships was more influential (persuasive - figurehead) than the expert power of formal education. In some situations that might not be the case, but the radio station was in the business of communicating with the public on matters that are not necessarily related to formal education. What the listeners wanted to hear was how the station understood their wants and needs (values, beliefs, customs - creation of trust). Credibility in this regard could only be achieved by one who has been through the mill, so to speak (political science). Formal education, on the other hand, might be seen as being less relevant to the delivered product and more related to procedural matters within the organisation. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.13 A well-oiled machine

After the Easter break, I was impressed about how ordinary everything really was in this organisation. The GM (position – leader – monitor) allowed everybody to go through their own routine with little or no supervision (free-rein – disposition to follow). There was a new person there, GW, who was doing some work experience. He was a 3rd year journalist student. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.14 Promoting another cause

I discussed with the GM a proposal for me going public on the radio station to advertise a certain campaign with which I was associated. The GM agreed that it was a worthwhile project (altruism – values, beliefs, customs) and used his legitimate authority (position – leader) to give it the go ahead (formal organisation). There was no need for me to make a formal presentation through the BoD or anyone else. There was no reason to ask about the worth of the exercise from any of the staff. The GM made it clear that he was the boss and he made the decisions. As far as he was concerned, there was no debate. Also, the fact that the exercise was going to happen had not met with any resistance with any of the staff (task motivated). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.15 Making a request

When the group of MBA students arrived for their meeting with the GM, the GM (position – leader) showed them into the staff room where I was working. The normal courtesy of tea and coffee was extended. The meeting went on for about two hours. The GM did most of the talking (negotiator). CL (MBA student) seemed to be the leader of the group of students, doing most of the talking for that group, which

focussed on information gathering. At the end of the session, the GM asked me if I could show the group of students around the studio. I declined on the basis that I was late for a meeting back at the university. The GM did not take this as an insult, he simply asked RW, a staff member, to conduct the tour for him. The GM had no legitimate authority to make me conduct the tour, but he did have such power over RW (formal organisation). My view was that RW would have done the task in any case (participative). The tone of the organisational culture was one of friendship and cooperation (disposition to follow). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.16 Unrealised potential

In another talk with N, we discussed the role of Boards of Directors in Aboriginal service organisations. I put it to him that there seemed to be some difficulty in defining exactly what the Boards were meant to do. For example, in the case of medical services, what decisions do the decision-makers make? That was a non-trivial issue. In his reply, he drew an analogy with this organisation. He suggested that the BoD for this radio station had little experience in the electronic media. What was missing at the annual general meeting (political hierarchy) was genuine community participation. He said that the best attendance that could be expected was the staff (task motivated) plus about five members of the community to be in attendance. They really had trouble in getting enough members' interest to constitute a BoD (political hierarchy). N stated that what they really needed were people who could do something for the station instead of just being representatives of the community (persuasive). By all means there was a need for community representation, but he felt that it was not the only interest that should be represented on the board. He wanted people with business experience and contacts and those with a depth of knowledge in

journalism (knowledge). There were a number of institutions that could make a worthwhile contribution to the station. For example, the UQ School of Journalism and the Aboriginal Studies Unit, along with representations from all of the major journalism schools in the stations range (liaison). He believed that the fact that the BoD is entirely staffed by Indigenous peoples was good in one sense, but it might also limit some possibilities in other areas. This is a negative outcome.

### 5.7.17 Misplaced loyalty

On one occasion, I raised in conversation with N the question of formal professional qualifications. N reiterated his view that people should not be employed in this organisation purely on the basis of their Aboriginality (values, beliefs, customs). He felt that they must be able to fulfil the technical requirements of the appointment as well as being an Indigenous person. He lamented that it is too often the case that some people see their Aboriginality as a substitute for technical qualifications. Being the only staff member with a university degree concerned him. He thought that the station needed more Aboriginal people with professional qualifications (creation of trust – task motivated). He asserted that the current appointments were made by the BoD (position – leader) on the basis of social relationships more than anything else. This is a negative outcome.

### 5.7.18 For the wrong reasons

The Sales and Marketing Manager (CC) was the only person employed in that area, and in terms of the organisation's financial strength, it was probably one of the most important positions. CC started life as a panel beater in a motor body repair shop. His skills in organising new work for the business soon saw him promoted to manager of that business. He managed to generate new business from some of the major new and

second-hand car dealers in the area. Once the business had been raised to a healthy level, the owner replaced him with his (the owner's) brother. That brother was qualified as a cabinetmaker. CC was demoralised by that exercise. He left that job and came across to the radio station. It was on the basis of his past success in the vehicle repair industry that prompted the station's management (position – leader) to offer him the job of sales and marketing (relationship motivated). The job was not advertised. It is important to note that CC had no formal training in the area of marketing. It is equally important to note that the station's success in marketing itself was less than satisfactory at the time of the case study. This is a negative outcome.

### 5.7.19 Leading from the front

The MBA students arrived for their brief on the organisation, for which they had accepted the task of writing a marketing plan as part of their MBA assessment. Interestingly, the GM chaired the meeting (position – leader) with me as an observer. CC (the sales and marketing manager) was nowhere to be seen. When I later questioned CC about this, he stated that he was unaware that the marketing meeting was going to take place. The students had arranged with the GM for the meeting at least two weeks in advance, so there was plenty of time for the GM to arrange for his sales and marketing manager to be at the meeting. The GM had instead taken it upon himself to run the show (autocratic – task motivated). This incidence was similar to the one where the GM decided that he must personally assume responsibility for the program manager, dislocating N from the role. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.20 Community service

CC and I further discussed the issue of the organisation's community service obligation (CSO). Essentially, the CSO was the primary reason why the station

existed; it was to provide an Aboriginal perspective (values, beliefs, customs) on all issues in Australian society (political science). The GM (position – leader) also promoted upcoming Aboriginal artists (altruism) by ensuring that an Aboriginal artist performed one in every five songs played (disseminator – resource allocator – task motivated). CC agreed that GM's potential for marketing was reduced in some areas by the CSO, but that in other areas, it was one of his greatest strengths. This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.21 Setting the standard

The GM was a larger-than-life figure (position – leader). While I was having a chat with him one day, he received a phone call from one of his daughters. I saw a demonstration of how firm and straightforward he could be when he told his daughter how she should deal with a particular situation. It was nothing more than a father giving good, sound advice to someone who needed it. What it did indicate to me was that it mirrored how he ran the organisation (values, beliefs, customs). He insisted, in fact he demanded, total honesty and reliability from all of the staff (task motivated). There were no exceptions (autocratic). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.7.22 Enforcing the standard

A new announcer, FD, came to the station from elsewhere. During his assessment as an announcer at the station, FD clearly impressed. There was no doubt as to his ability to operate the studio equipment and perform as a competent radio announcer. Everyone thought that he was a special talent. However, the GM (position - leader) was not at all impressed at the fact that FD had missed two of his rostered work shifts in two weeks. The GM said that it would not be so bad if FD had given some warning of his other commitments, but it was unacceptable that he failed to show with no

warnings or apologies. What FD had done was to let the team down. One morning at 7:00 am, the GM received a phone call to inform him that FD had not arrived at the station to do his shift. The station was meant to be on air from 6:00 am. It was that demonstration of being unreliable that caused the GM to give very serious consideration to terminating FD's appointment.

On the one hand, there was the expert power of FD being able to function as an experienced and gifted announcer, and on the other hand the legitimate authority of the GM to do what he felt was in the best interests of the station (autocratic). Even though FD had skills that not a lot of people had, another person who was more reliable could replace him. As the GM said, it was a fairly straightforward exercise to teach someone how to drive the studio. What cannot be taught is how to be honest and reliable. The bottom line for the GM in choosing staff was honesty and reliability (task motivated): "skills can be taught; a person's character is what they make of it themselves," he said (values, beliefs, customs). This is a positive outcome.

## 5.8 Radio station Case data analysis

The data and identification of variables for the radio station is listed in Table 5.8 and the analysis of that data and frequency of the variables is listed in Table 5.9.

The manager of the radio station relied heavily on his position power to achieve his goals. Persuasion was used occasionally, with knowledge and personal power playing a minor role. He had very little reason to call on his expert power.

Most noticeably, the manager performed the management function of leader, with negotiator and monitor functions playing lesser roles. His style of execution of his management duties was dominated by task motivation. At times he had to enforce the

organisation's rules, and the way in which he did this was autocratic. Because of the creative nature of the radio station, he generated a lot of trust and participation with the members. Most had a free-reign, but within defined limits.

The organisation was very formally structured, but the behaviour of the members was based heavily on their own values and beliefs; most just wanted to do the right thing. There existed a Board that provided policy and leadership, but the level of political activity was not too obvious. The ratings for the radio station indicate the quality of its outcome. There is an overwhelmingly positive feeling about this radio station among its listening audience.

Table 5-8: Radio station data

| Sample | Power | Management function | Manager's leadership style | Organisational context | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gaining entry | Position | Leader<br>Negotiator | Task-motivated | Formal organisation | Positive |
| The stamp of authority | Position | Leader | Autocratic | Formal organisation | Positive |
| Empowerment and creativity | Position | Leader | Free-rein<br>Task-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Disposition to follow<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| Leading from within | Position | Leader | Creation of trust | Disposition to follow<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| Building up business | Persuasive | Negotiator | Participative<br>Task-motivated<br>Relationship-motivated | Formal organisation | Positive |
| A helping hand | Knowledge | Negotiator | Participative<br>Relationship-motivated | Political science | Positive |
| A family affair | Position | Leader | Free-rein<br>Creation of trust | Formal organisation | Positive |
| Dedicated to the cause | Expert | Monitor | Participative<br>Task-motivated | Values, beliefs, customs<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| Laying down the law | Position | Leader | Autocratic<br>Task-motivated | Formal organisation | Positive |
| Leading from the front | Position | Leader | Autocratic<br>Task-motivated | Formal organisation | Positive |
| Calming the waters | Position<br>Expert | Figurehead<br>Leader<br>Monitor | Relationship-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Formal organisation<br>Political science | Positive |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Legitimising his position | Persuasive | Figurehead | Relationship-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Values, beliefs, customs<br>Formal organisation<br>Political science | Positive |
| A well-oiled machine | Position | Leader<br>Monitor | Free-rein | Disposition to follow<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| Promoting another cause | Position | Leader | Altruism<br>Task-motivated | Values, beliefs, customs<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| Making a request | Position | Leader<br>Negotiator | Participative | Disposition to follow<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| Unrealised potential | Persuasive<br>Knowledge | Liaison | Task-motivated | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Negative |
| Misplaced loyalty | Position | Leader | Task-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Values, beliefs, customs<br>Formal organisation | Negative |
| For the wrong reasons | Position | Leader | Relationship-motivated | Formal organisation | Negative |
| Leading from the front | Position | Leader | Autocratic<br>Task-motivated | Formal organisation | Positive |
| Community service | Position | Leader<br>Disseminator<br>Resource allocator | Participative<br>Altruism<br>Task-motivated | Values, beliefs, customs<br>Formal organisation<br>Political science | Positive |
| Setting the standard | Position | Leader | Autocratic<br>Task-motivated | Values, beliefs, customs<br>Formal organisation | Positive |
| Enforcing the standard | Position | Leader | Autocratic<br>Task-motivated | Values, beliefs, customs | Positive |

**Table 5-8: Radio station data analysis – identification of variables**

| Power | Management function | Manager's leadership style | Organisational context | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| Coercive VL | Figurehead VL | Autocratic L | The disposition to follow VL | Positive VH |
| Reward VL | Leader VH | Participative L | Values, beliefs and customs M | Negative VL |
| Persuasive VL | Liaison VL | Free-rein VL | Formal organisations VH | |
| Knowledge VL | Monitor VL | Altruism VL | Formal institutions VL | |
| Position VH | Disseminator VL | Self-interest VL | Religious hierarchy VL | |
| Personal VL | Spokesman VL | Task-motivated M | Political hierarchy VL | |
| Expert VL | Entrepreneur VL | Socio-independent VL | Political science VL | |
| Opportunity VL | Disturbance handler VL | Relationship-motivated L | Political magic VL | |
| | Resource allocator VL | The creation of trust L | | |
| | Negotiator VL | Disruptive leadership VL | | |
| | | The creation of uncertainty VL | | |
| | | | | |

**Table 5-9: Radio station data analysis – frequency of variables**

## 5.9 Case Study 4 - Aboriginal Land Council

The Land Council was incorporated as an Association under Part IV of the *Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976* (Cth) (the ACA Act). Its main function is to provide assistance to traditional landowners, particularly in relation to land rights matters in its geographic area of responsibility. This case study is constructed entirely from secondary data from the transcript of a Federal Court and from copies of letters that land council members had sent to the media and members of parliament. At the time of research the organisation was under the control of an Administrator.

### 5.9.1 The Registrar

The Administrator was appointed following complaints by some members of the organisation to the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations (formal organisation). The Registrar was of the opinion that sufficient irregularities appeared to exist that gave him no choice but to relieve the organisation's directors and management of their duties (task motivated - position – creation of trust). The theme of the complaints was that the land council was not doing the job for which it was created (disturbance handler) (transcript of Federal Court). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.9.2 The Administrator

I approached the Administrator for permission to conduct my research on the land council, but he denied me access to this organisation (position). The reasons he gave were that the organisation's performance and its ability to function normally were uncertain at this time and so he was not in a position to allow the staff to be distracted by a researcher (leader – autocratic formal - organisation). This is a positive outcome.

However, that did not mean that relevant information did not exist and that it could not be accessed by other means. Through my networking in the local town, I was able to establish that there were a number of people, both staff and ordinary members, who were not pleased with how the organisation was being run and were only too willing to provide me with copies of letters that they had sent to the Minister for Aboriginal Affaires and the local newspaper.

### 5.9.3 The way it was

Management and control of the day-to-day affairs of the organisation was vested in a Governing Committee (creation of trust – disposition to follow), the members of which are elected at each annual general meeting of the association (persuasive – political hierarchy). The Governing Committee in question was elected at the annual general meeting (the AGM) held in March 1998, prior to an Administrator being appointed (negotiator) to run the affairs of the organisation (formal organisation) (transcript of Federal Court). The appointment of the Administrator is a positive outcome.

### 5.9.4 Questionable leadership

For the staff that began working at the organisation in late 1995 and early 1996, it was obvious that the senior management did not fully understand the duties and responsibilities of a Native Title organisation. The staff were continually frustrated in their attempts to persuade the management of the organisation's role (autocratic - disruptive). Even though it was incorporated in June 1994, it was not until January 1997 that the organisation initiated its first Native Title action (leader - resource allocator). While the staff were keen to do their duty, they were inhibited by

management (position – formal organisation) (letter from person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.5 Tight control

The management kept a tight control over all funds (position – resource allocator). Even for routine matters such as a site visit, or the interview of an applicant who could not travel to this town, the coordinator always referred the matter to the manager (Bruce) for his approval (formal organisation). At times, a decision would be delayed for two or three months (autocratic - creation of uncertainty). The decision making structure was clearly ineffective in meeting the needs of the staff and their clients (letter from person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.6 Disruptive leadership

The staff attempted to establish some level of delegation of authority for routine business matters. After considerable effort, some administrative structures were established that appeared to be effective (formal organisation). However, when the time came to exercise some degree of empowerment, Bruce simply used his position to cancel whatever field trip was about to be undertaken (resource allocator). The trips were usually cancelled at the last moment (leader - autocratic – disruptive), often to the detriment of the staff who had done considerable organising and planning, and to the traditional owners, who had often arranged some time away from their employment for the meeting (letter from person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.7 The dictator

For the purpose of planning and organising, the unit managers requested details of the organisation's operational budget. The senior management and directors refused such

information (knowledge – position). This enabled the directors to either cancel or control activities such as field trips and research on the basis that there were insufficient funds available (resource allocator - disruptive). Bruce strictly controlled all of the day-to-day activities in the organisation (leader – autocratic – self interest). Nothing of any substance was allowed to happen without his personal approval (formal organisation – political hierarchy) (letter from person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.8 Starving the enemy

In the matter of dealing with the rights of traditional owner groups, Bruce had complete control over who got what (position – formal organisation). If he perceived a particular group as being hostile to his interests he would starve them of resources (resource allocator – autocratic - disruptive), even though they were legally entitled to those resources. The problem was compounded by the fact that all funding for native title matters for the entire region was channelled through this organisation, over which Bruce exercised total control (leader). He had designed the decision making structure in such a way that only he was able to control any significant activity (self-interest). If a particular group could not secure their rightful funds through this organisation, they had no access to any alternative funding. All groups were totally dependent on Bruce for any and all of their resources. In one particular case, when a client group were excluded in the negotiations for an Indigenous land use agreement, Bruce simply claimed that they did not exist. On the other hand, those groups that were perceived as being allies received full and adequate funding for all of their activities (relationship motivated – political hierarchy) (letter from person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.9 Keeping it secret

When the staff questioned the rationality of biased resource allocations, they were coerced into remaining silent through threats of having their employment terminated (autocratic – formal organisation). There were other blatant forms of bias in terms of travel allowance and vehicle allowance in which the senior staff were generously remunerated (position – relationship motivated) while junior staff received considerably less. When other staff wanted to hold community consultations and conduct other business consistent with the organisation's charter, they were always told that there were insufficient funds remaining in the travel budget (leader – knowledge – resource allocator). However, at the end of the financial period, the staff discovered that there was $1.2 million of surplus funds (self-interest – disruptive) (letter from person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.10 Controlling the process

Further evidence of bias is apparent in the manner in which the Indigenous Land Corporation divested an interest in a cattle station to an Aboriginal trading company. Bruce was Chairman of the trading company as well as being Chairman of the land council (position – political hierarchy). The situation arose where the legitimate traditional owners of the concerned tribe lodged a native title application over the property in question. Bruce responded by immediately instructing the land council (formal organisation) to lodge a counter native title claim over the same land in opposition to his own traditional owners (autocratic). At the same time, Bruce also instructed the land council to advise the Indigenous Land Corporation to divest the property to the trading company (resource allocator), of which he was also leader. The traditional owners made numerous representations to the Indigenous Land

Corporation by letter, phone and fax, requesting that their claim be processed. All correspondence from the traditional owners was totally ignored, while Bruce had his business attended to promptly (self-interest). The trading company is now the legal owner of the property in question. At the time of the complaint lodged at the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations, the only land divestment for the entire region has been to the trading company (letter from person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.11 The absolute dictator

Quite apart from the total control that Bruce had over the land council's resource allocation, he also controlled the staff by controlling their access to resources and closely monitoring their activities (leader - position). All STD phone calls were monitored, staff movements in and out of the office were recorded, time books were kept (formal organisation), and superannuation was not paid into the designated investment fund (creation of uncertainty). Even though the staff were on weekly salaries, the Administrator monitored their attendance at the office and deducted sums of money from their pay at his discretion. There were no mechanisms to appeal any decision (autocratic) (letter from person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.12 Stacking the deck

Further concern was expressed over the employment of field officers (political hierarchy). Normally, the positions would be advertised and the best-qualified persons would get the jobs (formal organisation). This was not the case at the land council, where Bruce personally selected each field officer (relationship motivated) and they reported directly to him (leader - self-interest). Each field officer was equipped with a vehicle, fuel cards and video equipment (resource allocator), all of which was

considered by many to be an extravagant expense for the amount of work that they did (political science) (letter from person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.13 Contempt of due process

This organisation did not employ a lawyer (position). The preferred arrangement was that the AC Legal Service (ACLS) was paid a retainer to act on their behalf (resource allocator – formal organisation). However, a researcher employed by ACLS who was also a lawyer, voluntarily gave legal advice to staff members, for which she had her employment terminated (autocratic). The staff were extremely frustrated because ACLS had proved themselves to be of no assistance in native title matters. The staff made the observation that ACLS did nothing to advance the interests of any traditional owner. The only time that they were active was when the self-interests of Bruce (leader) were being dealt with (political hierarchy – political science) (letter from person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.14 Controlling the result

During the normal course of processing a Native Title claim, there developed a conflict between two tribal groups over the alleged ownership of certain land areas, which were said to be extremely rich in oil and gas deposits. The potential financial benefits to the traditional owners were significant. Two tribal groups were in conflict over the claimed area, of which one tribal group was associated with Bruce, the manager of the land council. That situation was not at all uncommon in Native Title claims, as decades of dispossession and relocation has diluted some of the traditional affiliations with the land. However, the rival group maintain that their claim was valid and could be easily corroborated by some basic anthropological research. On the other

hand, the group associated with Bruce felt that these land areas were theirs (self-interest) (letter from person 2).

The normal course of events for a case such as this one would be for the land council to engage an anthropologist who might then establish the proper tribal history of the disputed land area (formal organisation). Bruce, who was also the leader of one of the tribal groups, stood to gain considerable financial reward if his group established ownership of the disputed land area.

The decision as to which anthropologist to engage and the instructions that they were given rested with this organisation, which was controlled by Bruce (position). Bruce authorised the organisation (resource allocator) to engage an anthropologist on behalf of his own tribal group (relationship motivated), but refused the same privilege to the opposing group. When questioned by the rival traditional owners on this discrepancy, Bruce stated that his group are the rightful owners of the disputed land so there is no need to waste any money on their claim (autocratic) (letter from person 2). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.15 Conflict of interest

The rival traditional owners took the matter to their ATSIC Regional Council. Bruce is also the ATSIC Commissioner for the region (position) and had significant control over the Regional Council and its members. He again rejected the rival claim at that level (political hierarchy – political science – self-interest). The traditional owners then took their case to the Board of Commissioners of ATSIC. Bruce had considerable influence with the Board of Commissioners (persuasion). The rival claim was again rejected at that level (autocratic) (letter from person 2). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.16 Controlling the game

Bruce then proposed that the two groups should come together and discuss the matter (negotiator). He proposed that ACLS should arbitrate on the matter. In the event of any unresolved conflict, ACLS would determine the true ownership of the land, which is a final decision (autocratic - self-interest). As Bruce is the leader of ACLS, he controlled everything that happened in that organisation (formal organisation – position – political hierarchy) (letter from person 2). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.17 Playing God

The rival traditional owners took their case to the State Government's Native Title Unit (formal organisation). Upon reviewing their case, a senior public servant looked at the land area under claim and said, "That claim is just too big, you can't have all of that" (resource allocator). That public servant then made an arbitrary decision on the spot and decided that their claim was to be rejected (position - autocratic). There was no attempt to have the matter investigated by anthropologists or historians (letter from person 2). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.18 Musical chairs

In May 1998, 'Mary' unexpectedly arrived at the organisation and informed the staff that she was the new CEO (position). The previous CEO had been demoted without explanation (autocratic – political hierarchy). Mary advised all staff that a review of the organisation's operations and staffing requirements was being undertaken (leader – formal organisation). She introduced 'David' from ACLS as being the key figure in the review process. That afternoon Mary was handed a petition signed by 11 staff

members advising her of the more pressing matters that required her attention (letter from person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.19 Caesarism

One day the 11 staff that signed the petition were summoned into the Boardroom to be confronted by an interview panel. 'Peter' chaired the meeting (leader – disturbance handler). The staff were informed that demoting the CEO and dismissing the accountant sorted many of the alleged problems out (formal organisation). Following the meeting, two of the staff were called back into the room and subjected to a barrage of abuse, intimidation and accusations by Peter over their role in drafting the petition. Upon receipt of the petition, Bruce immediately fired four of the staff and demoted another two (autocratic). No arrangements were made for the continuity of management of their projects. He then replaced them with his friends and family members who had no experience or qualifications in Native Title work (relationship motivated – self-interest). The vacant positions were not advertised (political hierarchy – political science) (letter from person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.20 The fox guarding the chickens

As a result of those actions, a group of traditional owners got together and approached the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to intervene on their behalf. The traditional owners were concerned that some of the long-standing issues raised in the petition would not be addressed if the current manager remained in control of the organisation. The incident of the dismissal and demotion of staff and the consequent publicity had prompted the management of the organisation to instruct ACLS to conduct a review of its operations (political hierarchy - political science). That was unacceptable to the traditional owners because this organisation's manager also

controlled ACLS (position – self-interest – formal organisation) (letter from a local ATSIC Regional Councillor).

The traditional owners were determined that their interests should be addressed on an equitable basis and other important matters should be addressed in a comprehensive and independent manner. The traditional owners were of the view that the only way to properly address those matters was the immediate appointment of an Administrator with comprehensive powers of investigation. The matter was particularly urgent considering the way in which Bruce generated an atmosphere of fear and intimidation in the running of the organisation (autocratic) (letter from a local ATSIC Regional Councillor). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.21 Creating reality

One of the dismissed staff members, 'John', was employed as a legal officer by the previous CEO (formal organisation). From the very first time that he was employed at the organisation, Bruce treated him with contempt. Bruce preferred his own arrangement where he retained ACLS as the organisation's legal adviser (leader). Bruce controlled ACLS through being Chairman of its Board of Directors (position) (letter form John).

In the day-to-day course of his work John made various attempts to communicate with Bruce, but it was to no avail. After Bruce fired him, John sought redress for unfair dismissal. At an interview with an industrial relations arbitrator, Bruce denied even having met John. Further, Bruce was heard to say, "John, you know me and you know how I operate. If I want minutes of a meeting to say something, then I can produce them. If I want financial accounts to show something, I can produce them.

There is no way that you will ever beat me on this" (autocratic) (letter from John). This is a negative outcome.

Eventually, the Federal Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs did act on the matter. On 18th June 1998, the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations (the Registrar) served a notice on the organisation pursuant to Section 71 of the ACA Act calling upon it to show cause, by 26th June 1998, why an Administrator should not be appointed under Section 71 of the Act (transcript of Federal Court).

The Registrar alleged that the Governing Committee had acted in the affairs of the Corporation in its own interests rather than in the interests of the members of the Corporation or otherwise in a way that appeared to be unfair or unjust to the members of the Corporation. Bruce and his tribal group posed a conflict of interest in relation to traditional boundaries with the traditional owners whose interests the Corporation's objectives were primarily designed to protect. The Registrar went on to address the matter of four staff members being summarily dismissed and two other staff members being demoted because of their endorsement of the petition (transcript of Federal Court).

### 5.9.22 Undermining due process

On the 20th of June 1998, the Governing Committee of this organisation resolved that it was of the opinion that the organisation was insolvent or likely to become insolvent (formal organisation - position – leader). They therefore appointed 'Bill' (self-interest), a chartered accountant, as Administrator pursuant to Section 436A of the Corporations Law (the CL) (political science) (transcript of Federal Court). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.23 The Registrar finally acts

On the 3rd of July 1998, as a result of the failure of the organisation to show cause pursuant to the Section 71 notice (formal organisation), the Registrar (position) appointed 'Sam' as the Administrator (disturbance handler) of the organisation pursuant to Section 71 of the ACA Act (task motivated – creation of trust) (transcript of Federal Court). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.9.24 Inventing the rules

By a proceeding commenced on the 29th of July 1998, Bill sought directions from the court as to the validity of Sam's appointment and his entitlement to act as an Administrator under the ACA Act (formal organisation – political science). In a later application in the same proceeding, the Registrar (leader), supported by Sam, challenged the validity of Bill's appointment and his entitlement to act as Administrator under Part 5.3A of the CL (transcript of Federal Court).

Bill's evidence was that, in substance, he advised the meeting that unless they were able to form an opinion that the organisation could pay its debts as and when they fell due, the implication must follow that at some point in the future that it might not (position - spokesman). Bill further stated that if there was some concern about the organisation being able to pay its debts as and when they fell due, then that was ground upon which they could pass the resolution (self-interest) (transcript of Federal Court). This is a negative outcome.

Justice 'Smith' determined that Bill had intentionally created the impression with members at the meeting to the effect that if they could not form a view that the organisation was solvent then it stood to reason that it could become insolvent.

Accordingly, the committee passed a resolution to appoint Bill as Administrator under the CL. The minutes prepared by Julie record that Bill had undertaken to work with the Committee. Finally, they record thanks to the Committee for entrusting him to work with the organisation. Somewhat ironically, the final observation made by Bill, and recorded in the minutes, was that by working with the current staff he would have things working well in a month or more (transcript of Federal Court).

### 5.9.25 Ignoring the rules

Justice Smith found that it was quite clear that the Committee, in passing the resolution (position), was of the view that the legal requirement for the resolution to be passed was that its members form an opinion (political science) that they were unable to determine whether the organisation was or was likely to become unable to pay its debts (self-interest – leader- formal organisation). Plainly, that view was an error of law. Consequently, the Governing Committee failed to address the question required to be addressed by CL and therefore did not validly exercise the power conferred by the CL (transcript of Federal Court). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.26 Misusing the rules

Justice Smith then went on to address the issue of improper purpose in the exercise of the CL. It was clear that the exercise of the power to appoint an Administrator under CL must be in furtherance of the objects of the CL. Thus, if the (position) power to appoint an Administrator was exercised for a purpose unrelated to that object, but for an ulterior or extraneous purpose (leader), then it would be invalidly exercised. A purpose of preventing the Registrar from appointing an Administrator under Section 71 of the ACA Act would clearly be an appointment for an ulterior and therefore improper purpose (self-interest); as such a purpose was unrelated to the object or

purposes of the CL. It would also be an improper purpose to exercise the power conferred under the CL to perpetuate control or positions of the directors or the Governing Committee (formal organisation) (transcript of Federal Court).

In the present case, the actual facts and circumstances leave little doubt as to the purpose of the Governing Committee in purporting to exercise its power to appoint Bill as Administrator. The purpose, or more accurately, the purposes that actuated the Governing Committee to appoint Bill as Administrator were to prevent the Registrar from exercising his power (political science) to appoint an Administrator under Section 71 of the ACA Act and to enable the Governing Committee to continue to have input and influence over the conduct and affairs of the organisation through their appointee, Bill. Those purposes were not purposes for which the power under the CL might properly be exercised and were ulterior and improper purposes (transcript of Federal Court). This is a negative outcome.

**5.9.27 The wrong rule book**

On the 20th of June 1998, the problems that were required to be addressed by the organisation were the deficiencies and irregularities, which were the subject of the Section 71 notice, rather than any difficulties with creditors. At the time, 'Steven' had been addressing the accounting and financial problems (leader) of the formal organisation. If the Governing Committee was of the view that Steven was not sufficiently addressing those problems, it was open to it to engage Bill or his firm to do so (position). There was no need for Bill to be appointed as an Administrator to achieve that object. Further, there were no outstanding claims being pressed by creditors and no evidence available at the time of actual or potential insolvency. In those circumstances, any argument that the power might have been exercised for the

purpose of CL is untenable. Accordingly, the appointment of Bill was also invalid on the ground that the Governing Committee's appointment of Bill was actuated by an impermissible purpose (self-interest). Justice Smith concluded that Bill's appointment as Administrator under CL was invalid, void and of no effect (transcript of Federal Court). This is a negative outcome.

Bill then challenged the validity of Sam's appointment pursuant to Section 71 of the ACA Act, but this proved to be a fruitless exercise on his part. Shortly after Sam had won the judgement of the Federal Court, the Registrar terminated his appointment as the Administrator for no apparent reason. The Registrar then appointed 'Tom' to take his place (letter from person 2).

### 5.9.28 Secret selection

After Tom had been in charge of the organisation for a few weeks, he appointed 'Mathew' as the interim Chief Executive Officer (position). That was a decision that took everyone by surprise. However, Tom justified his decision on the basis that he had to choose a CEO, who was as much as possible, not involved in the local politics of the organisation (leader) (statement by Tom).

The Administrator, Tom, was in the process of restructuring the constitution of the land council (creation of trust). He had consulted widely with numerous Aborigines that were stakeholders in this formal organisation. The main thrust of the new constitution was that all tribal groups would have equal representation on the Board of Directors. That would, to a large degree, undermine any attempt to stack the Board in favour of any particular interest group. Tom received positive feedback that his proposals were being praised by all of the land council's members (statement by Tom). This is a positive outcome.

### 5.9.29 The inconvenient venue

It was necessary to call a meeting of the members to vote on the proposed changes to the constitution (position – leader). That was timed for a Saturday in this town (local newspaper advertisement) (autocratic). It just so happens that a popular rugby league team was playing in town at that time and an Aboriginal cultural festival was planned for the next day. A large number of Aborigines in the area are supporters of the football team, or at least appreciate the sport. Also, a large number of Aborigines were committed to their cultural activities long before the venue and timing for the constitutional vote was announced. Consequently, many were surprised and upset that the meeting had been moved from this town to another location with short notice and for apparently no valid reason. The result was that those who were committed to activities in this town honoured those commitments and Bruce was able to have his supporters attend the meeting and defeat the Administrator's proposed amendments (self-interest – political hierarchy – political science) (letter from person 2). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.30 The return of the fox

After some minor adjustments were made to the accounting procedures, the Administrator made his confidential report to the Registrar. On the basis of that report, the Registrar then determined that he was satisfied that the control of the land council could now be returned to the members (position). An AGM (political hierarchy) was called by the Registrar to be held in this town on the grounds that he (the Registrar) was now satisfied that an Administrator was no longer needed (local newspaper advertisement) (leader - autocratic). That raised much protest from those who had made the original complaints about the governance of the land council

because it appeared that nothing of substance had been achieved from the entire exercise of appointing an Administrator (formal organisation) (letter from person 2). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.31 The same old game

The original complaints centred around the allegations that the resources were heavily biased in favour of one interest group (self-interest), that certain staff were dismissed (autocratic) for challenging the apparent misconduct (position) of a senior official and that unqualified staff were appointed to take their place (leader). The appointment of the replacement staff was illegal (relationship motivated) on the basis that none of the positions were advertised (political hierarchy) (letter form person 1). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.32 Friends in high places

The questions raised by many concerned members of the land council were; exactly what information did the Registrar have to cause him to determine (position - leader) that all was now well with the land council? Did anything change that would prevent the alleged misdeeds from recurring? Had the matter of the dismissed staff been addressed? Had the matter of the illegally employed staff been addressed? Was fair representation of all tribal groups assured? The answer to all of these questions was no (autocratic) (local ATSIC Regional Councillor).

To the best knowledge of those who had been observing the activities of the Administrator, it was only the accounting procedures that were put in order (formal organisation). All other matters remained unresolved. What was of particular concern to those members was the fact that once the 'old guard' regained control of the

organisation, it would take them less than 24 hours to change things back to the way they were. This included the accounting system (letter form person 2). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.33 Here we go again

In March 1999, the Annual General Meeting was held (political hierarchy). That meeting was called by the Registrar for the purpose of electing the Board of Directors (local newspaper advertisement). There was some evidence that the Registrar was not entirely satisfied with the prevailing circumstances. He took the rather unusual step of writing to every member of the Land Council encouraging them to participate in the AGM (persuasive) (local ATSIC Regional Councillor).

The AGM took place in the premises next door to the Land Council. Bruce had been very active with his political science. At the meeting, he had a total of 360 votes and his opponents had 160 (personal). The outcome was that Bruce and his team made a clean sweep of all board positions (entrepreneur). The old guard was back in power (formal organisation) (local ATSIC Regional Councillor). This is a negative outcome.

### 5.9.34 Back to square one

The Administrator appeared to feel a little uncomfortable with this outcome, but was reluctant to voice any opinions one way or the other. In a conversation with me, he conceded that nothing substantial had been achieved through his appointment and, for all intents and purposes, the land council was back to square one. Bruce had managed to orchestrate the political hierarchy to his advantage (self-interest).

On the 24th of March 1999, the Chief Executive Officer made it known that he had tendered his resignation. Other staff had given notice that they too would resign from

the land council (formal organisation). Bruce (leader) then appointed his own CEO (position) and continued on with business as usual (autocratic). It was back to square one (local ATSIC Regional Councillor). This is a negative outcome.

## 5.10 Land Council data analysis

The data and identification of the variables for the Land Council is listed in Table 5.10, and the analysis of that data and the frequency of the variables are listed in Table 5.11.

The manager used his position power for the vast majority of his time. There was only the occasional use of knowledge power, less use of persuasion, and very little coercion. Most of his position power was exercised through the management function of leadership, with a moderate use of resource allocation. His style of execution was overwhelmingly autocratic, based on his self interest. There were some relationships that were cultivated as a management tool, and there was also some disruptive leadership where it was necessary to corrupt a legitimate process.

The context was one of a very formal organisation, controlled by a well-developed, highly integrated political hierarchy. Apart form serving the interests of the manager and his network, the organisation did not fulfil its mission to its clients. For them, the outcome was predominantly negative.

Table 5-10: Land Council data

| Sample | Power | Management function | Manager's leadership style | Organisational context | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Registrar | Position | Disturbance handler | Task-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Formal organisation | Positive |
| The Administrator | Position | Leader | Autocratic | Formal organisation | Positive |
| The way it was | Persuasive | Negotiator | Creation of trust | Disposition to follow<br>Political hierarchy | Positive |
| Questionable leadership | Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Disruptive leadership | Formal organisation | Negative |
| Tight control | Position | Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Creation of uncertainty | Formal organisation | Negative |
| Disruptive leadership | Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Disruptive leadership | Formal organisation | Negative |
| The dictator | Knowledge<br>Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Self-interest<br>Disruptive leadership | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Negative |
| Starving the enemy | Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Self-interest<br>Relationship-motivated<br>Disruptive leadership | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Negative |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Keeping it secret | Coercive<br>Knowledge<br>Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Self-interest<br>Relationship-motivated<br>Disruptive leadership | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Negative |
| Controlling the process | Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Self-interest<br>Disruptive leadership | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Negative |
| The absolute dictator | Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Creation of uncertainty | Formal organisation | Negative |
| Stacking the deck | Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Self-interest<br>Relationship-motivated | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy<br>Political science | Negative |
| Contempt of due process | Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy<br>Political science | Negative |
| Controlling the result | Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Self-interest<br>Relationship-motivated | Formal organisation | Negative |
| Conflict of interest | Persuasive<br>Position | Leader<br>Resource allocator | Autocratic<br>Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy<br>Political science | Negative |
| Controlling the game | Position | Leader<br>Negotiator | Autocratic<br>Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Negative |
| Playing God | Position | Resource allocator | Autocratic | Formal organisation | Negative |
| Musical chairs | Position | Leader | Autocratic | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Negative |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caesarism | Position | Leader<br>Disturbance handler | Autocratic<br>Self-interest<br>Relationship-motivated | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy<br>Political science | Negative |
| The fox guarding the chickens | Position | Leader | Autocratic<br>Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy<br>Political science | Negative |
| Creating reality | Position | Leader | Autocratic | Formal organisation | Negative |
| Undermining due process | Position | Leader | Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political science | Negative |
| The Registrar finally acts | Position | Disturbance handler | Task-motivated<br>Creation of trust | Formal organisation | Positive |
| Inventing the rules | Position | Leader<br>Spokesman | Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political science | Negative |
| Ignoring the rules | Position | Leader | Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political science | Negative |
| Misusing the rules | Position | Leader | Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political science | Negative |
| The wrong rule book | Position | Leader | Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political science | Negative |
| Secret selection | Position | Leader | Creation of trust | Formal organisation | Positive |
| The inconvenient venue | Position | Leader | Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy<br>Political science | Negative |
| The return of the fox | Position | Leader | Autocratic | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Negative |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The same old game | Position | Leader | Autocratic<br>Self-interest<br>Relationship-motivated | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Negative |
| Friends in high places | Position | Leader | Autocratic | Formal organisation | Negative |
| Here we go again | Persuasive<br>Personal | Entrepreneur | Self-interest<br>Relationship-motivated | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy<br>Political science | Negative |
| Back to square one | Position | Leader | Autocratic<br>Self-interest | Formal organisation<br>Political hierarchy | Negative |

**Table 5-10: Land Council data analysis – identification of variables**

| Power | Management function | Manager's leadership style | Organisational context | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| Coercive VL | Figurehead VL | Autocratic H | The disposition to follow VL | Positive VL |
| Reward VL | Leader VH | Participative VL | Values, beliefs and customs VL | Negative VH |
| Persuasive VL | Liaison VL | Free-rein VL | Formal organisations VH | |
| Knowledge VL | Monitor VL | Altruism VL | Formal institutions VL | |
| Position VH | Disseminator VL | Self-interest M | Religious hierarchy VL | |
| Personal VL | Spokesman VL | Task-motivated VL | Political hierarchy M | |
| Expert VL | Entrepreneur VL | Socio-independent VL | Political science L | |
| Opportunity VL | Disturbance handler VL | Relationship-motivated L | Political magic VL | |
| | Resource allocator L | The creation of trust VL | | |
| | Negotiator VL | Disruptive leadership VL | | |
| | | The creation of uncertainty VL | | |
| | | | | |

**Table 5-11: Land Council data analysis – frequency of variables**

## 5.11 Cross case comparisons

The aim of this section is to compare the management functions of Aboriginal managers across the four cases. This is necessary to establish if there is any common management function that is uniquely Aboriginal. Each case is different in the context of its discipline and operating environment. The only common element is that they are all managed by Aboriginal managers.

The frequency in which the variables occur in each case is shown in Table 5-12 to Table 5-16. A list of all variables for all cases is shown in Table 5.17.

For each case, the occurrence of each variable is represented as a ratio to the total number of samples for that case. This method was used to compensate for the fact that the cases vary considerably in the volume of available information. Any variable that indicated a medium (M) to very high (VH) occurrence was highlighted. The impact that each variable had in the overall performance of the organisations had not been studied, but might be the focus of future longitudinal studies. It is quite possible that low frequency events controlled the outcomes to a much larger degree than the high frequency events, but the limitations on this research prevented exploring that issue.

There are four case studies that are analysed. In the course of analysing the data, I decided to split the second case (legal service) into two separate studies because I found that the internal and external environments were being controlled by two separate organisations. From this point forward, the case studies now consist of the following:

Case 1 – Aboriginal Health Service;

Case 2a – Legal service internal environment;

Case 2b – Legal service external environment;

Case 3 – Radio station; and,

Case 4 – Aboriginal land council.

#### 5.11.1.1 Bases or sources of power

This section describes how Aboriginal managers used their power in the cases, which represent organisations under Aboriginal management but operating in very different contexts. Table 5-12 indicates the cross case use of power, with position power being by far the most dominant in all cases. The next most frequently used power was persuasion. Regardless of the discipline or the operating environment, it is clear that the Aboriginal managers of the case organisations used their position power.

**Table 5-12: Cross case comparison (bases or sources of power)**

| Power | Case 1 | Case 2a | Case 2b | Case 3 | Case 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| Coercive | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Reward | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Persuasive | L | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Knowledge | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Position | **VH** | **VH** | **VH** | **VH** | **VH** |
| Personal | L | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Expert | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Opportunity | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| | | | | | |

#### 5.11.1.2 Management function

Table 5-13 is a cross case comparison of management functions. There is a reasonable spread across all types of functions, with the lowest spread occurring in Case 4. The function of leader occurred most frequently across all cases. The next most frequently used management function was entrepreneur.

**Table 5-13: Cross case comparison (management functions)**

| Leadership function | Case 1 | Case 2a | Case 2b | Case 3 | Case 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| Figurehead | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Leader | **VH** | L | M | **VH** | **VH** |
| Liaison | L | L | VL | VL | VL |
| Mentor | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Disseminator | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Spokesman | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Entrepreneur | **H** | VL | L | VL | VL |
| Disturbance handler | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Resource allocator | L | VL | VL | VL | L |
| Negotiator | VL | VL | VL | L | VL |
| | | | | | |

### 5.11.1.3 Leadership styles

Table 5-14 compares the managers' leadership styles. A wide range of styles was used across all cases, with no particular cross-case pattern evident. Leadership styles used in Case 1 were primarily relationship-motivated power and trust-creation; Case 2a used a task-motivation leadership style; Case 2b used primarily an autocratic style; managers in Case 3 primarily a task-motivation style; and managers in Case 4 primarily used autocratic and self-interest style.

**Table 5-14: Cross case comparison (leadership styles)**

| Leadership style | Case 1 | Case 2a | Case 2b | Case 3 | Case 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| Autocratic | VL | VL | **H** | L | **H** |
| Participative | VL | L | VL | L | VL |
| Free-rein | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Altruism | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Self-interest | VL | VL | M | VL | **M** |
| Task-motivated | VL | **M** | L | **M** | VL |
| Semi-independent | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Relationship-motivated | **VH** | VL | VL | L | L |
| The creation of trust | **H** | L | L | L | VL |
| Disruptive leadership | VL | VL | L | VL | VL |
| Creation of uncertainty | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| | | | | | |

### 5.11.1.4 Organisational context

Table 5-15 is a cross-case comparison of the organisational contexts in which the samples were recorded. Case 1 stands alone in its high use of political magic; the other four cases indicate a strong use of formal organisations. Values, beliefs and customs occur strongly in Case 3. Political hierarchy occurs in Cases 2b and Case 4.

**Table 5-15: Cross case comparison (organisational context)**

| Organisational context | Case 1 | Case 2a | Case 2b | Case 3 | Case 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| Disposition to follow | VL | L | VL | VL | VL |
| Values, beliefs, customs | VL | VL | VL | **H** | VL |
| Formal organisations | L | **VH** | **VH** | **VH** | **VH** |
| Formal institutions | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Religious hierarchy | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Political hierarchy | L | VL | **M** | VL | M |
| Political science | VL | VL | L | L | L |
| Political magic | **VH** | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

### 5.11.1.5 Organisational outcomes

Table 5-16 indicates the dependent variable of the organisational processes. Positive outcomes are indicated strongly for Cases 2a and 3, while negative outcomes are indicted strongly for Cases 1, 2b and 4. It is interesting to note that Case 2b indicates both positive and negative outcomes.

**Table 5-16: Cross case comparison (organisational outcomes)**

| Organisational outcome | Case 1 | Case 2 (a) | Case 2 (b) | Case 3 | Case 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| Positive | VL | **VH** | L | **VH** | VL |
| Negative | **VH** | VL | **H** | VL | **VH** |
| | | | | | |

### 5.11.2 Analysis of the research paradigm

Table 5-17 presents all of the variables from the four cases. The taxonomy of this data in itself does not enable any pattern to be established as to what source or base of power causes either positive or negative organisational outcomes. Cases 2a and 3 indicate a positive bias, whereas Cases 1, 2b and 4 indicate a negative bias. The interesting point to consider is that all cases were dominant in the use of position power, but with diametrically opposed outcomes. Clearly, there must be some other force in play that manipulates the process. Even the use of coercive power has been shown by the case analysis to be able to produce a positive outcome. The managers' use of autocratic leadership produced both positive and negative organisational outcomes, as did a task-motivated leadership style. Similarly, the context of a formal organisation produced both positive and negative organisational results.

The analysis reveals that organisational outcome appears to be determined by the leader's desire to either produce an outcome for the good of society or to pursue self interest at the expense of society. Cases 2a and 3 had as their mission the well being of society and the organisations produced positive outcomes with a task-motivated leadership style. In Case 1, relationship-motivated and trust-creation styles were used to produce a negative outcome, whereas Cases 2b and 4 used autocratic and self-interest styles to produce negative organisational outcomes.

**Table 5-17: From power to outcome**

| Variable | Case 1 | Case 2a | Case 2b | Case 3 | Case 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| **Power** | | | | | |
| Coercive | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Reward | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Persuasive | L | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Knowledge | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Position | **H** | **VH** | **VH** | **VH** | **VH** |
| Personal | L | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Expert | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Opportunity | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| **Management function** | | | | | |
| Figurehead | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Leader | **H** | L | **M** | **VH** | **VH** |
| Liaison | L | L | VL | VL | VL |
| Monitor | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Disseminator | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Spokesman | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Entrepreneur | **H** | VL | L | VL | VL |
| Disturbance handler | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Resource allocator | L | VL | VL | VL | L |
| Negotiator | VL | VL | VL | L | VL |
| **Leadership style** | | | | | |
| Autocratic | VL | VL | **H** | L | **H** |
| Participative | VL | L | VL | L | VL |
| Free-rein | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Altruism | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Self-interest | VL | VL | M | VL | **M** |
| Task-motivated | VL | **M** | L | **M** | VL |
| Socio-independent | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Relationship-motivated | **VH** | VL | L | L | L |
| The creation of trust | **H** | L | L | L | VL |
| Disruptive leadership | VL | VL | L | VL | VL |
| The creation of uncertainty | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| **Organisational context** | | | | | |
| The disposition to follow | VL | L | VL | VL | VL |
| Values, beliefs, customs | VL | VL | VL | **H** | VL |
| Formal organisations | L | **VH** | **VH** | **VH** | **VH** |
| Formal institutions | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Religious hierarchy | VL | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| Political hierarchy | L | VL | **M** | VL | **M** |
| Political science | L | VL | L | L | L |
| Political magic | **VH** | VL | VL | VL | VL |
| **Organisational outcome** | | | | | |
| Positive | VL | **VH** | L | **VH** | VL |
| Negative | **VH** | VL | **H** | VL | **VH** |
| | | | | | |
| Case | 1 | 2a | 2b | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | | |

## 5.12 Key findings

The key findings to emerge from this research are:

1. The values, beliefs and customs of traditional Aboriginal culture were not evident in the management of the Aboriginal organisations.

2. The presence or otherwise of contemporary Aboriginal culture was not obvious in the management practices, but the possibility does exist that it might have been present within the organisations in some other context.

3. The theoretical model failed to explain how or why the positive or negative organisational outcomes were achieved.

4. Where domination and control did occur, it was not related to a type of power. Rather, it was more a function of the manager's character, expressed through their leadership style.

5. Mintzberg's (1973) ten-function model of management is applicable to the management of the targeted Aboriginal organisations.

These findings are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

### 5.12.1 Traditional Aboriginal culture and management

The literature review indicated that traditional Aboriginal culture and societies were unique in many ways. A strong emphasis was placed on formal institutions and religion. There was no indication of any formal organisations or political hierarchy. To varying degrees, traditional Aboriginal society had similar indications to the four cases in the areas of management function and the manager's leadership style, but it is

the organisational (or societal) context that separates traditional Aboriginal society from today's examples of organisational management.

Using Hofstede's (1980) model of cross cultural work values as a benchmark, traditional Aboriginal culture had high power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, low individualism, and low masculinity. The traditional culture overwhelmingly produced positive results for that society. The case studies, in contrast, ranged from high to low power distance, high to low uncertainty avoidance, high individualism, and medium to high masculinity.

Mainstream Australian managers are characterised as follows:

(Source: Karpin 1995, p. 531)

| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
|---|---|
| Non-elitist / egalitarian attitudes | Lack vision / short-term focus |
| Introduce innovative work practices | Indecisive / few risk takers |
| Responsive / adaptable | Poor team players |
| Open communication | Image conscious |
| Forthright / aware | Unemphatic behaviour |

The general literature indicates that contemporary Aboriginal culture and society is highly heterogenous (Bowden & Bunbury 1990; Gilbert 1988; Hiley 1997; Rowley 1986; Sutton 1998). Given that today's Aboriginal society does not fall into a single, identifiable category, this research has explored the extent to which traditional Aboriginal culture or Australia's industrialised culture influenced the management practices in the observed case studies.

Lubatkin et al. (1997), using Mintzberg's (1973) model of management functions, found strong empirical evidence to support the universalist hypothesis that managers from different cultural-industrialised nations engaged in the same managerial

activities. Their argument is corroborated by organisations such as the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which found that Western management models are as valid in transitional and less developed nations as they are in developed nations. It is quite possible that Mintzberg's model reflects fundamental characteristics of the human species rather than the characteristics of managers involved in the contemporary management of Western organisations (Nicholson 1998). The implication for Lubatkin's conclusion is that Aboriginal management should also conform to Mintzberg's model. The possibility, therefore, must be that human nature leads managers, regardless of their cultural-industrial orientation, to behave in a manner consistent with Mintzberg's model.

Convergence theory, on the other hand, assumes that at some point in history the two management practices were divergent. The essence of convergence theory argues that whatever their origins, ideologies, or historical traditions, all industrial societies will eventually converge on a common pattern of political, economic, and cultural institutions (Bullock et al. 1988). The 'logic of industrialism', it is held, compels all modern societies to adopt certain 'core' practices as functional requirements of an industrial system, which includes the specialised division of labour, industrial work discipline, coordinated planning and management, relatively free labour mobility, and relatively high levels of education and welfare (Bullock et al. 1988). However, the application of convergence theory in this instance is problematic in that traditional Aboriginal culture never was an industrialised society.

In the absence of an industrialised base in traditional Aboriginal society, and given that Aboriginal management practices in the case studies are consistent with Anglo-Australian management, it is reasonable to conclude that a shift might have occurred

in the values, beliefs and customs of the Aboriginal population. The Case Study data was not able to confirm or rebut this argument. While this assertion is considered to be possible on the basis of the available evidence in the case studies, the limited organisational sample in this research prevents drawing a conclusion on this issue with respect to the general Aboriginal population. Clearly, a much larger sample would be needed to make that conclusion.

Ralston et al. (1997) assessed the impact of national culture and economic ideology on individual work values in four major countries. Their argument is framed in the context of the convergence-divergence-crossvergence of values. They conclude that convergence and divergence identify polar extremes, while crossvergence was a value-set that was in between the values supported by national culture and economic ideology. However, traditional Aboriginal society did not have a national culture or an economic ideology. Many Aborigines today do have a national culture (they are Australian) and an economic ideology (they live in a cash society). On that basis, it is difficult to argue how today's Aboriginal management might have been derived from traditional Aboriginal culture.

Andrews and Chompusri (2001) demonstrate how traditional Indigenous cultural values can be retained within the management of a Western-focussed industrial organisation. The Kingdom of Thailand has been able to retain its language, culture and tradition almost entirely intact. Ethnically much less diverse than most of its neighbours, Thailand boasts the distinction of being the only south-east Asian country never to have been colonised by the West throughout a national history spanning over 800 years. Following considerable culturally based disputes, a Western parent organisation operating in Thailand eventually conceded ground to the fact that "Thai

business norms appear to express qualitatively distinct ideas of what constitutes appropriate management practice" (p. 88).

The situation in Thailand is in sharp contrast to Aboriginal Australia. Traditional Aboriginal culture had no evidence of large scale organisational management, and in any case, that culture was decimated by the impact of Western colonialism. Culturally distinct management can and does exist, as demonstrated by Andrews and Chompusri (2001), but their research was based on an Indigenous culture that was never colonised, has a history of organisational management, has remained culturally intact, and that culture continues, unbroken, to be practiced by the general population. It is not clear if this is the case for Australia's Aboriginal cultures.

Rojek (1986) described the basis of convergence theory in the context of Marx's analysis of the laws of capitalist accumulation, Durkheim's views on the shift from mechanical to organic solidarity, and Weber's discussion on bureaucracy and the rationalisation process, concluding, "the structure of industrial societies is tending to assume the same shape and trend of development" (1986, p. 26). What must be highlighted for the purpose of this research is that traditional Aboriginal culture did not have any organisations; the system of governance and sustainability was in the form of institutions based on the hunter-gatherer family or tribal unit.

Newman and Nollen (1996) argue that national culture is a central organising principal of employees' understanding of work, their approach to it, and the way that they expect to be treated. National culture implies that one way of acting or one set of outcomes is preferable to another. However, prior to Western colonisation, there was no national culture in Australia (Berndt & Berndt 1974). The Aboriginal population today generally identifies as being Australian, but for many they are not entirely the

same as their Anglo-Australian neighbours (Beckett 1988). While there is some literature to describe what they *are not*, there is nothing apparent to describe what they *are* in terms of a national culture that is different to other Australians. The management practices and behaviour of people in the case studies indicated the universal application of Mintzberg's (1973) ten management functions.

Hofstede (1980) analysed culture and management in the context of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity in his model of national economic growth. Hofstede defines culture as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another. He concluded that there was no relationship between national culture and economic growth but, that for wealthier countries, individualism impedes economic growth.

As the literature review revealed, prior to European contact, however, traditional Aboriginal society was not a national culture; rather there were hundreds of different cultures across the entire continent. The traditional economy that did exist is not a suitable phenomenon from which we might use Hofstede's model to analyse economic growth. Also, the notion of growth implies change, whereas traditional Aboriginal culture was focussed on maintaining the *status quo*. Of particular relevance today is that the Aboriginal population of Australia does not have a collective programming of the mind or culture; instead it is highly heterogenous, with a high diversity of social, political and economic interests (RCIADIC 1988).

Even if a distinct Aboriginal culture were indicated in the case studies, research indicates it would not necessarily induce culturally different management. Thomas and Bendixen (2000) measured Hofstede's dimensions of culture for 586 middle managers in South Africa. A similarity on these dimensions was found between the

ethnic groups. Both management culture and perceived management effectiveness were found to be independent of both race and the dimensions of culture.

In contrast to Thomas and Bendixen (2000), whose research focussed on different cultures within the one country, Neelankavil (2000) found that when national boundaries are considered in conjunction with cultural differences there is distinct differentiation in the factors affecting managerial performance. However, while it is recognised that cultural, financial, political and operating factors vary by country, Borkowski (1999) found that transnational corporations (TNCs) did not use different criteria to evaluate managers based on their location (host or home country). These arguments suggest that the national culture might be much more powerful than minority ethnic cultures in determining management practices, but the evidence is not conclusive. In the case studies there were no indications that any of the organisational members identified themselves as anything other than Australian, suggesting that the Anglo-Australian culture was the dominant force affecting management practices.

McGaughey and De Cieri (1999) proposed that the dynamics of organisations are reflected in their macro-level variables (convergence), and that they maintain their culturally based dissimilarities in terms of micro-level variables (divergence). The macro-level variables that indicate convergence include contextual contingencies such as globalisation, communications technology, travel, and interdependence and collaboration between countries and organisations. The micro-level variables that indicate divergence are normally associated with psychological phenomena such as individual attitudes, performance and behaviours.

The macro-level variables described by McGaughey and De Cieri (1999) did not exist in traditional Aboriginal society. The micro-level variables of individualism, work

values and behaviour are indicated in the data, but the available literature on today's Aboriginal culture (if indeed it is the case that 'a' culture exists) indicates an extremely heterogenous society, thereby excluding any notion of unified divergence from the Western model.

There are examples of cross-national differences in management (Lee et al. 2000). While convergence theory accounts for some of the debate over the reason for these differences, Lee et al. offer a different model based on the comparative cultural approach. This argument is based on the assumption that a wider set of cultural norms in each society is a powerful force for differentiation across borders. These wider societal norms force organisations to develop a set of management styles that match their environment. Having established a management style to match the domestic culture, there will be resistance to change as the organisation is exposed to an imposing 'outside' culture.

Traditional Aboriginal culture did possess cultural norms quite distinct and apart from the Western culture. However, in the context of the argument put by Lee et al. (2000), the case studies were not differentiated by societal norms, culture or national boundaries.

Traditional Aboriginal culture was diametrically opposed to scientific technique and the logic of industrialism. For that reason, the various debates on convergence theory are not able to describe how Aboriginal management practice came to be what it is today. On the other hand, Lubatkin et al. (1997) described a management paradigm that does not rely on a pre-existing national culture, industrial activity, or economic growth as an historic origin. The culture or society can be anything at all, but when it comes to the management of their organisations or institutions, the managers

instinctively adopt a universal methodology consistent with Mintzberg's (1973) model of management functions.

The behaviours observed in the four case studies are diametrically opposed in every respect to the values, beliefs and customs of traditional Aboriginal society. The anthropological literature indicates that traditional Aboriginal society was unique in many ways. It was dominated by religion and had no political hierarchy. It was undemocratic and governed by the lores of formal institutions, with no evidence of any formal organisations. The authority of traditional culture and religion was absolute and there were no parliamentary structures or legislation. Commerce was unknown and there were no recognised structures or authority beyond the immediate family or tribal group. The conclusion is that the management functions observed in the case studies are consistent with Mintzberg (1973), with no evidence that traditional culture played any role in those functions. It remains unknown if contemporary Aboriginal culture influenced the management of the organisations.

The styles of Aboriginal management used in the case studies varied widely. Some examples indicated positive results while others indicated negative results. The argument that a particular Indigenous culture underpinned the management of these organisations was not detected. The empirical evidence indicates a discontinuity between traditional culture and today's Aboriginal organisations in terms of values, beliefs and customs.

Culture is peculiar to a particular time and place (Bullock et al. 1988). The urban Aboriginal culture that existed in the towns at the time of the field research was not defined in a formal sense, although there was anecdotal evidence of an informal culture. The Aboriginal participants themselves were eclectic in terms of their tribal

origins, family structures, political and social values, and practices within the work environment. To suggest that a particular Aboriginal culture existed is not at all unreasonable, but it was not documented and was not evident in the research. At best, the organisational narratives alluded to 'culture', but were never specific in any detail.

McGaughey and De Cieri (1999) argued that the *form* and *content* of functional specialisation that develops with growth would vary according to culture. The case studies, however, indicated that this has not occurred. Management and leadership in the Aboriginal organisations were aligned to normal Anglo-Australian management science.

This finding corresponds to recent research conducted by Lloyd and Härtel (2002), which provided evidence for hybrid forms of the notions of convergence and divergence. In essence, they found that foreign subsidiaries of multinationals could adopt both the strategy and practices of the parent company, adapt both the strategy and practices of the parent company to local conditions, adopt only the parent strategy or adopt only the parent practices. They found that the drivers behind the organisations' decisions could be culture, could be a range of factors with culture still dominating, could be a range of factors with minimised cultural consideration, or could be factors unrelated to culture (e.g. regulatory frameworks, product, market). Given that Aboriginal-managed organisations were created by an act of the Australian government, it is feasible that the regulatory frameworks were key drivers of the management practices and not traditional Aboriginal culture.

From within, the participants collectively identify their organisation as being Aboriginal. This is also the case from the external perspective. However, the organisations' identity can be viewed in a context other than as an example of

divergence theory. They have an Aboriginal identity by way of parliamentary legislation through the ATSIC Act (1989) and the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act (1976). Their identity is not the result of divergent cultural values, but is a political construct by the dominant industrialised society.

The convergence hypothesis centres on the argument that the common requirements of management or of industrialism disregard the importance of cultural differences (McGaughey & De Cieri 1999), and that form and structure is caused by environmental rather than by heredity factors (Macquarie 1991). Not all aspects of an organisation shift under the influence of industrialism. As organisations are becoming more similar in terms of structure and technology (macro level variables), people's behaviour within those organisations (micro level variables) continues to manifest culturally based dissimilarities (McGaughey & De Cieri 1999). In contrast, the Aboriginal organisations studied indicated divergence in terms of organisational identity, but not in people's behaviour within those organisations.

While the logic of industrialism continues to penetrate all aspects of Aborigine's lives, some guardians-of-the-faith are constructing and using an ideology of Aboriginality in an attempt to regain and retain control over both things and ideas (Stokes 1997). They are fighting a rearguard action that, from the perspective of convergence theory, appears to be running against the odds. For many, they have used the *modus operandi* of industrialised society to assert their cultural difference. No prediction is made of the outcome.

### 5.12.2 The theoretical model

The theoretical model (Figure 2.1) derived from the management literature failed to explain how or why the positive or negative organisational outcomes were achieved.

No direct causal relationship could be established between power (as 'the' independent variable) and organisational outcomes (as the dependent variable), which is inconsistent with the theory and data presented in more prominent management literature (e.g. Astley & Sachdeva 1984; Crozier 1973; Hardy 1995; Hickson et al. 1971).

Organisational outcomes were better explained as a product of the managers' leadership style than as a product of power. A *high* use of autocratic style in Cases 2b and 4 indicate a negative outcome, whereas a *very low* and *low* use of autocratic style in Cases 2a and 3 respectively, produced a positive outcome. Case 1 produced a negative outcome with the use of leadership based on relationships and the creation of trust. In traditional Aboriginal society, the creation of trust was critical to its function, and it always produced positive outcomes.

### 5.12.3 The use of power

Cases 2b and 4 indicate that domination did occur, but that was a result of the leader's character, not the type of power that was used. Power was but a tool that was used to facilitate the leader's agenda. Hardy (1995 p. xx) has listed 17 disparate interpretations of what power could be, concluding, "That there is little agreement"; this research supports her view.

In traditional Aboriginal culture there was a broader range of the types of power used. This might be because the management of traditional Aboriginal society had to address all of the phenomena that related to their society and their personal life. The case studies were restricted to addressing organisational-specific phenomena.

Those case studies whose manager's values and actions were aligned to the organisation's mission produced positive results, and those managers who diverged from their formal mission produced negative results. There is no data to explain why a particular manager might pursue either the organisation's mission or their self interest. The literature on power does not extend to this depth of understanding of the human mind or the metaphysical world.

### 5.12.4 Mintzberg's management model

The same management function across different cases caused different outcomes. The management literature indicates that Mintzberg's (1973) ten functions of management are universal. Management science assures leaders that they can achieve wonders, but it does not tell them what wonders to achieve. Management functions, used professionally, can achieve good outcomes (e.g. the Salvation Army), or they can be used professionally to achieve bad outcomes (e.g. Hitler). Simply using good management skills does not necessarily mean good outcomes. In traditional Aboriginal society, it was the disturbance handler role that dominated, as the key goal was to maintain the *status quo*.

The universalist hypothesis (Lubatkin et al. 1997) argues that all managers perform the ten functions that Mintzberg (1973) observed in his research. It would appear, on the basis of this argument, that the human species will instinctively organise its affairs according to Mintzberg's model, regardless of the local culture or industrial status. This research concludes that management functions, by themselves, did not control or influence the dependent variable.

## 5.13 What controlled or influenced the dependent variable?

Analysis of data indicated that the organisational outcomes were inconsistent with power, management function and organisational context. The managers' leadership style, on the other hand, does indicate greater alignment to outcomes. Autocratic, self-interest and relationship-motivated leadership styles generated negative outcomes, although there is some evidence of autocratic leadership being used to create a positive outcome. Task-motivated style generated positive outcomes. The creation of trust generated a significant amount of positive and negative outcomes (see Table 5.17).

Organisational context sets the stage upon which the managers played their role in the organisational process. It provided the *raison d'etre* that enabled them to engage their particular leadership style. Environmental forces could impose the context, or it might be manipulated by the leader. In any case, it is not the context that controlled the outcomes; it was more the case that the managers achieved what they wanted to achieve, using organisational context as the playing field.

# 6 Conclusion

## 6.1 Implications for future theory

### 6.1.1 Power

For the purpose of this research, a theoretical model was constructed that included all of the views on power that exist in the recent management literature. It must be emphasised that the theoretical model is not a model of power in its own right, but a conceptual model of organisational process that incorporates power as an integral component. Research on power is problematic in that the multiple variables that exist within the power construct are largely beyond the world of physical experiences, and that world is the domain of metaphysics. Metaphysics, by definition is "abstruse"; understanding "based on speculative or abstract reasoning" (The American Heritage Dictionary; p. 430). It is no wonder then that Hardy (1995), for example, concluded that there is little agreement over the causes and nature of power.

The argument presented in the management literature to date is that there is no theoretical meaning of power. Without a credible theory, deductive analysis is not possible. What the management literature does support is the notion that power has its origins in the metaphysical world. Unfortunately, the metaphysical argument appears to be beyond the established parameters of the management discipline. Further, the available literature on the philosophy of the metaphysical world indicates that we know very little about that world. It follows then that the management disciplines know nothing about the nature or origin of power, a situation that appears likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.

Thus far, I have argued that the absence of a theoretical model of power excludes deductive analysis. What remains is the possibility of inductive reasoning. Such induction, however, is limited to the physical evidence of what has occurred *after* power has been exercised, as power appears to reside in the metaphysical before its use. Induction, then, while assisting our understanding of power to some degree, is unable to capture a critical element to the understanding of power, the metaphysical to physical transformation that takes place in the production of power. The vigorous debate in the power literature by this perspective can be explained by the grappling with trying to know the unknowable.

## 6.2 Implications for practice

The current school of thought in management science that Organisational Behaviour equips managers to predict and control behaviour in organisations is problematic. This thesis has argued that metaphysical elements are integral to the source of human behaviour, and it is not within the domain of human knowledge to understand or predict metaphysical phenomena. The basic claim of Organisational Behaviour as a discipline must be challenged on this basis.

### 6.2.1 Defining Aboriginal management

Some Aboriginal managers raise the notion of the need for culturally appropriate management. The details of such a culturally appropriate management practice, however, have never been clearly defined in either the management literature or the more general Aboriginal literature. Furthermore, no literature could be uncovered that specifically described Aboriginal management in today's modern society. Thus, to the best of my knowledge, this thesis represents the first description of Aboriginal management practices.

The key features of management and leadership practices of the traditional Aboriginal culture were presented in Chapter Three. There it was shown that the disposition to maintain the *status quo* that was apparent in traditional Aboriginal culture, in effect, suppressed change. The fact that the management practices (i.e. Mintzberg 1973) in the case studies were consistent with modern Western practices supports the argument for the universalist hypothesis put by Lubatkin et al. (1997). Lubatkin et al. (1997) also argue that traditional Indigenous culture and industrialisation are inversely proportional, but the data did not reveal that depth of information. This thesis has not argued that the case studies were void of any form of Aboriginal culture; it simply demonstrated that Mintzberg's (1973) management functions are consistent with the management of the targeted Aboriginal organisations.

There was every indication that the Aboriginal organisations studied were being managed in accordance with the rules, regulations, policies and procedures expected in any similar organisation in Australian society. Convergence theory does not explain how the Aboriginal organisations came to be what they are today because those organisations did not exist prior to the enabling legislation of the ACA Act (1976) or the ATSIC Act (1989). If they did not exist then how could they converge?

An examination of Table 6.1 makes it clear; in no way does the management of the targeted Aboriginal organisations reflect any of the values, beliefs and customs of traditional Aboriginal society. It is unknown if the Case Studies were consistent with a form of contemporary Aboriginal culture because there is no literature to describe what that benchmark is.

| Traditional Aboriginal society | Today's Aboriginal management | Today's Anglo-Australian management |
|---|---|---|
| Dominant religious hierarchy | No religious hierarchy | No religious hierarchy |
| No political hierarchy | Dominant political hierarchy | Dominant political hierarchy |
| Undemocratic society | Democratic society | Democratic society |
| Dominant formal institutions | No formal institutions | No formal institutions |
| No formal organisations | Dominant formal organisations | Dominant formal organisations |
| Ruled totally by authority of traditional culture | No authority of King or tradition | No authority of King or tradition |
| No formal Parliament or legislation | Dominated by Parliamentary legislation | Dominated by Parliamentary legislation |
| No financial structure | Dominant financial structure | Dominant financial structure |
| No regional, national or international structures | Well established regional, national and international structures | Well established regional, national and international structures |

**Table 6-1: Temporal and cultural perspectives**

## 6.3 Future research

### 6.3.1 Limits of the existing paradigm

In Chapter Two, the most recent literature on power was reviewed. A theoretical model was constructed to reflect the arguments presented in that literature. The review indicated that much of the literature is many years old, but even the more recent literature (eg Morgan 1997, Yukl 1998) has failed to advance the debate. What is not made apparent in the literature is how the various authors made the connection from the metaphysical world of power to the physical world, its outcome. For example, Robbins et al. (2001) depict power as being either a source or a base. Their model clearly shows that the source of power is position, personal, expert or opportunity. The problem with their model is that the current research has shown that position power, for example, can produce both positive and negative outcomes (see Table 5-17). There is nothing in their model to show how two very different outcomes can come from the same source. The conclusion must be that their 'source' is not the source at all; there must be an exogenous factor involved. For this reason, it is concluded that the theoretical model of power constructed from the available management literature is incomplete or flawed. The case studies showed no evidence of a causal relationship between the independent variable (power) and the dependent variable (outcome).

### 6.3.2 Expanding the paradigm

The accepted theoretical model of power as an independent variable is problematic. The case data indicated, for example, that the use of position power (Cases 1, 2b and 4) produced a negative outcome. However, position power also produced positive outcomes

in other cases (2a and 3). Indeed, it can be shown that traditional Aboriginal society, in particular, used most types of power with very positive outcomes (positive, that is, in the context of that paradigm).

The management literature's description of position power as using one's position in a formal organisational structure to influence the actions of others seems quite inadequate given that the same power produced opposite results. Clearly, another variable must be involved, one more closely related to the person or deeply embedded in their character that can explain the different outcomes. The case study data indicated that leadership style is most likely to be the primary independent variable. Power, thus is a variable, but it is independent of the outcome.

The major problem with the use of a non-intrusive methodology in this thesis is that it precluded the use of an idiographic study, but the consequences of that decision were not apparent in the beginning. Nonetheless, even if idiographic studies had been undertaken, it is doubtful that such studies would lead to a scientific conclusion on the nature of power. In this research, it has been argued that the origin of power is in the metaphysical world. The various sources and bases of power described by Robbins et al. (2001), Morgan (1997) and Yukl (1998) serve as nothing more than tools that facilitate the user's will. The nature of power and its intended purpose might be determined long before it is actualised. Future research and analyses of power must have a focus on the deeper psychological world of the individual person, if that is at all possible.

The attempt to theorise how a metaphysical variable, power, controls or influences a physical variable, the outcome, appears to be the key reason why the theoretical model

failed to achieve internal validity. This finding is consistent with the views put by great philosophers such as Rene Descartes, Gilbert Ryle and Bertrand Russell (Perry & Bratman 1993). For this reason, power cannot be considered to be 'the' independent variable that controlled the dependent variable. There must be another prime force in play.

While it might prove to be rather challenging to analyse the metaphysical world, the inductive analysis of physical consequences of that world might prove to be an exercise in futility in terms of theory development. Given the nature of the debate on metaphysics, if indeed this is the origin of power, and given the current limits of management science, this researcher concludes that the management discipline will fail to establish a theoretical model of power, at least, any time soon.

## 6.4 Conclusion

While I began this thesis anticipating that power would act as 'the' independent variable, a careful consideration of the literature proved to indicate that power is a metaphysical phenomenon that transforms into organisational outcomes, which are the physical reality. However, the metaphysical-physical divide is not articulated in the current management literature (or for that matter, in the philosophy literature), yet this might be the key to a greater understanding of this debate. The case study data do not have the detail of an idiographic study, but generating more detail in the context of inductive reasoning is unlikely to have the capacity to provide new information, just more detail about the same information. Nonetheless, the importance of leadership style was underscored if the aim is to predict the outcomes of the exercise of power.

In summary, the empirical evidence collected in this thesis research was not able to confirm or rebut the notion of culturally appropriate management being used in the observed Aboriginal organisations. The case studies did reveal, however, that there was no management practice that is divergent to Australia's industrialised society. That is, Mintzberg (1973) can be used as a management tool for the targeted organisations. It must be noted, however, that the scope of this research was narrow, being restricted to the management of urban Aboriginal organisations. It is quite possible that some divergent forms of management practice might exist in Australia, given the heterogenous and multicultural nature of the population, but this will remain the object of inquiry for future researchers.

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